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*of*

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## VOICES OF LIVING PROPHETS



# VOICES OF LIVING PROPHETS

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*A SYMPOSIUM OF PRESENT-DAY PREACHING*

COMPILED BY  
THOMAS BRADLEY MATHER, M.A., TH.D.



COKEBURY PRESS • NASHVILLE

## VOICES OF LIVING PROPHETS

more than I can say. They are all busy men. Yet they found time to send me a sermon. I owe them all a debt of kindness. I am indebted also to the publishers of the *Christian Century Pulpit* for permission to use the sermon by Dr. Newton on "The Great Expectation."

I am sending this book out with the hope that men will read it and find in it a new inspiration for the honor and integrity of the ministry of Jesus Christ. I hope that these sermons will enable ministers and laymen all over the land to see in Christianity the hope of the world, and to agree with a recent preacher who said: "The future of Christianity? Without it, there is no future."

THOMAS BRADLEY MATHER.

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI.

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I

*The Timeless Quest*

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GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

PROFESSOR OF HOMILETICS AND SOCIOLOGY

AUBURN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AUBURN, N. Y.

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS was born in 1868 at Mount Carmel, Ind. He graduated from Ohio State University with the degree of A.B. He received the degree of LL.B. from the Cincinnati Law School, and studied at Yale Divinity School. The honorary degrees of D.D. and L.H.D. have been conferred upon him.

He was ordained in the Congregational ministry. He has been pastor at Greenfield, Mass.; Burlington, Vt.; Detroit, Mich., at two different times; Providence, R. I. He is now Professor of Homiletics and Sociology at Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.

He is a contributor to many religious journals. He was awarded the Church Peace Union prize for an essay on International Peace in 1914.

During the war he was director of Foyer du Soldat with the French Army.

He is the author of many books. Some of his recent books are: *Modern Religious Cults and Movements*, *Craftsmen of the Soul*, *The Making of the Christian Mind*, and *The Procession of the Gods*.



# I

## THE TIMELESS QUEST

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

*And he removed from thence, and digged another well: and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.*

GENESIS 26: 22.

THIS text is a sentence or two from an ancient story of disputed upland pastures, nomad peoples living in black tents, quarrelsome clans, and flocks and herds feeding over the hillsides and needing, above all else, water. It is the story of a little fighting and doubtless much more noisy arguing over water rights, a show of valor, protest, and competition between swarthy folk in a sunlit land, where there was never water enough and where a well was a thing to be bequeathed by a father to his son to be treasured as a great possession or, if necessary, to be fought over.

But there is a gleam through it all of something vaster. The wells themselves were only pits to catch and hold the wash of winter rains, hard to dig in rocky soil with poor tools, but indispensable to life then and symbols still of more enduring supplies for more inescapable needs. You may read for yourselves the vivid account and what came of it all. Let us think together of that last well, Rehoboth, which put an end to all their quarrels, and haunts us still with the lovely suggestion of its name, the well of

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“room enough.” It is a marvelous well, that well of “room enough,” and the quest for it was already old when the herdsmen of Isaac and Gerar strove together. The earliest and most inevitable form which the quest took was the quest for more land, a place in the sun.

There is in the Luxembourg galleries a picture of almost dramatic vividness. In the background of it are empty space and far horizon and wash of such clear cold light as only French artists know how to paint. A little procession passes across the foreground, a procession of skin-clad, long-haired men, masterful with their spears for staves, striding alongside ox-drawn carts the very creaking of whose wheels you can hear and the carts themselves loaded with rough household gear and women and children sitting wearily upon their pitiful possessions. It is the artist's conception of the first migrations of our race, setting out from their grassy plain and seeking room enough. You can see in their eyes some gleam of mystic quest, and destiny goaded their oxen.

The land they were leaving was nearly as empty as the lands they were seeking. They were migrating not because they were crowded in fact but because they were pressed in spirit, subject to some strong impulse and dimly anticipated need. We call it now land hunger; but it was something far more imponderable than that: it was the first projection against the skyline of history of the demand of the human spirit for more room. The migratory procession has never ceased from that day to this. Our humanity has always been on the trek; we have left nothing unexplored, nothing unsubdued. We have even hoisted our flag above the unimaginable loneliness of Antarctic snows as though in the futile possession of them we should

find satisfaction for the nostalgia of our spirits for the boundless.

I

Along with room enough in land possession we have always been driven, and are driven still, by the quest for room enough in economic resources. The herdsmen of Isaac and Gerar were not the first who fought over water rights nor the last either.

We have contended for the hinterlands from which rivers are drained and for the rivers themselves. We have wanted water to drink, water for irrigation, and water for our trade routes. In our quest for room enough we have been after coal and iron and oil, desperately eager for the raw materials out of which the structure of our economic wealth is built, and by the strange coincidences of history we are ourselves living in a time when all these forms of competition which have been so long in action have reached their crisis.

There is no longer anywhere unoccupied, unpossessed, unchallenged room enough either in the ownership of land, the possession of raw material, or sovereignty over the trade routes of earth and air and sky. The frontiers are gone.

I remember from my boyhood an old map which would be now, I think, if it were in existence at all, about a hundred years old, a map of interior America west of the Mississippi River. It was actually, as far as that region was concerned, a map of spaciousness and alluring emptiness with Indian Territory written across the larger part of it. It has taken far less than a hundred years to turn the emptiness of that map into states and the states them-

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selves into competitive populations. Our human tides have been turned back against themselves, and the strife for economic room enough, which has been the secret of the futile fighting of our humanity, has grown more intense and more tragic.

If our ears were keen enough, we might hear some menacing echo of guns in the Far East, fighting for room enough. It has become a tragic, futile strife between the nations for lands already occupied, so crowded that there is no way to make room in them for more of the living except to kill those who are already there. And yet by a delusion of which we cannot be cured sovereign nations of the world to-day are persuaded that they can find room enough by subjugating their neighbors. There has been no time in the memory of any of us when there was not some repercussion of guns against some horizon, sometimes too faint to be clearly heard at all, sometimes swelling into a tragic diapason along a thousand miles of embattled front, fighting for room enough.

The quest has taken a still more immediate and intense form, having now become industrial competition within the frontiers of the nations themselves. Great industries are contending for markets, and their competition is only another aspect of the old contest which was fought round about a well in Syria. There are wanting room enough for what twenty-three acres and a single factory can make, room enough for the output of Gary and Youngstown, room enough for the enormous productive power of the industrial civilization, and the economic status of America to-day is shaken and impoverished by their strife.

It involves individuals and groups; the strong, the shrewd, the far-seeing find room enough for a little while, but there is increasingly less room anywhere for the weak and the underprivileged. The streets of our cities are full of men who want room enough to work in. The competitions of our whole order press us toward the shadow, crowd us out of the sun.

They do indeed for a little while lift the more successful into positions of luxury, possession, power; but even their position is unstable. Every man over fifty-five years old, no matter how capable or well trained, knows that he has to fight for his little region of room enough. If he stumbles, he is crowded down; if he falls, he is trampled over; if he is less capably trained, he is crowded out sooner than that. The projections of all this strife for room enough darken the stormy horizons of our international life.

## II

The bitter reason of it all is that we are carrying on this costly and often tragic competition for economic room enough in a world whose potential economic spaciousness is beyond the reach of the most grandiose imagination. We have not even begun to touch our economic resources; there is room enough in the world to grow bread for every hungry child; there is stuff enough in the world to build warm and gracious homes for everyone shivering in the cold and labor enough to build it. There is room enough, if we know how to use it, to take every man who has a mind and two hands and make him a useful and contented

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part of the commonwealth, to make every loving heart and every tender impulse part of our human treasure if we only knew how.

Our first great trouble is that we are seeking a "well of room enough" down the wrong road. We shall never reach it through heartless competition or selfish monopoly or stupid self-aggrandizement. There is never room enough for the strong to trample, the wise to scheme, the capable to push the weak aside, and the questing to take no thought for any but themselves. There is not room enough down that road: the only road down which there is room enough is the road of wise sharing, of intelligent coöperation, of the general assumption of the burdens and perplexities of humanity as our common human problem and the disposal of them in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

When we shall have organized our quest for economic room enough in his spirit, sought it in his way, and conceived it with his understanding, we shall find room enough, and not till then.

### III

But the whole quest is in part the misdirection of what is finest in human nature, and it is also a quest for misconceived satisfactions. There is within us some sense of a destiny for which the frontiers of time and space are too confining, a quenchless longing for some spaciousness of life and condition to satisfy our sense of kinship with the unseen and eternal. And so many of our satisfactions, when we have realized them, leave us still unsatisfied. If a man has possession enough, he builds

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himself a house of twenty rooms, presently makes it forty, and still thinks himself too crowded.

We have made the skylines of our cities grandiose with towers whose multicolored lights say unto the stars, if the stars can see or heed them, "We were built by folks who want room enough; we have taken the sky for our possession: we seek spaciousness under the stars themselves; we accept no frontiers as final: we are always pushing them back and asking for more room." These towers of ours are not built out of steel and marble, they are built out of the aspiring passion of the human soul.

Here, too, we have defeated ourselves when there have been all the while other regions in which there is always room enough—the only regions in which we shall find our peace.

### IV

The angel on the tower of this church looks across to four buildings which are themselves symbolic of the regions in which our quest for room enough can actually find no frontiers, and we ourselves make our adventurous migrations at the cost of no one else. They have walls, but their walls are built only to shelter what in itself acknowledges no walls. The first of them is the College of the City of Detroit, and the towers above it have their message. "There is always room enough," they say, "in the kingdom of the mind. You shall reach no frontiers in your quest for truth and knowledge."

The herdsmen of Isaac and Gerar thought the Syrian stars beneath which they quarreled were lights hung in a

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ceiling so near that if you built a tall enough tower you could storm the sky. Now the heavens have opened up and back into unimaginable spaces; we have made the stars tell us the secret of their composition, we have heard in reverence the music of their movement in their ordered orbits, and every new telescope reveals a range beyond the range of the already seen. There is always room enough for the astronomer as he searches the sky. There is room enough in the very dust beneath our feet for the life work of a chemist, and he will leave the dust still unexplored. There is room enough in every science for the tireless action of a mind which finds life all too short. There is room enough in every craft for a lifetime of labor, discipline, and happy skill.

The second building toward which the angel looks is the Library. And who can ever be imprisoned as long as he has a book to read? Every book is a window or a road or a comrade; it is a way into history, into the poet's singing vision. It is a road into the inexhaustible drama of the human spirit. If we should carry our quest for more room into the unexhausted possibilities of our intellectual life, our horizons will widen toward the stars.

The angel on the tower looks toward Symphony Hall, and there is always more room in music. Every symphony carries us out into a world of audible dream and wonder; it enfranchises our earthborn spirits and makes them free of harmonies and vistas and unsuspected beauties. When we have heard the Unfinished Symphony a score of times there is always in it something new of



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tenderness or longing to vibrate in the strings of a violin and pluck at our own heartstrings.

There is always room enough in art. The blue and luminous horizons of every Italian picture suggest the endless amplitude of beauty. There is room enough in every old lined face Rembrandt has painted for all the patience and the sorrow, the laughter and the tears of a human soul. There is room enough in the lovely broken fragments of classic art to indicate the frontierless country in which the artist lives and works and into which he guides all those who love his art.

And if you grow tired of marble halls, there is room enough in an April crocus to satisfy the hunger of winter-bound spirits, room enough in grasses which begin to live again in green to satisfy our own sense of kinship with all earth-rooted life. There is room enough in sunrise and sunset, there is room enough in the overarching skies. There is even room enough for dreams and longings in the transfigured smoke and mist which give sometimes an unearthly quality to our familiar streets. And if there is not room enough in all such things as these, we may be citizens of a still more spacious order. There is always room enough in goodness. I have known many saints first and last, uncalendared but still saints. They have lived graciously and unselfishly and without any renown at all. But they have always tried to be good, they have always found room enough to be better still.

No one of us has ever reached the frontiers of kindness or found the end of patience or come within sight of the limits of the possibilities of perfection of his own

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soul. There is room enough in love, God knows, radiant, shining, light-touched spaces. No one has ever been able to say, "If I would, I can love no longer, because I have come to the end of the kingdom of love and there is no longer any room for love." No one has ever spent kindness so opulently as to be able to say, "There is no need for kindness left nor any more room in which to be kind nor any exhausted possibilities in my own kindness."

Ah, there is room enough in the regions of the soul and in our practice of the presence of God and in our growing likeness to Jesus Christ for all the power of us and the passion of us. Our fretted, embattled society will never free itself from bitterness and the poverty and the perplexity of its material struggles until it carries the timeless quest of the human soul for room enough over into its own native land into the quest for an inner wealth of life into friendship, into truth, into beauty, into faith, into fellowship with the unseen and eternal. There is always room enough there.

## V

But you say: "There is not room enough for us, even in the kingdom of the mind or spirit. Our lives are so short that before we have begun even to understand how great life may become we reach the end of it. Whatever other frontiers we push back or disregard there are the final and inexorable frontiers of death itself. That shadow darkens all our hopes. How can you say there is room enough when beyond all that life may offer, however

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wisely and lovingly we live it, we see the shadow and the dust and the dark?"

Easter is the answer to just that, the assurance of room enough for every vision and every hope unfettered by time and opening out upon immortal largenesses. Easter morning lights for us the unfolded portals of the tomb and so vanquishes the shadow cloaked from head to foot. The Easter faith sweeps around the limitations of our temporal lives the vastness of the eternal and says, "There is room enough; be brave and go on."

Room enough to love without caution or economy. We are afraid to love sometimes because love is so tender a thing and so subject to chance that we say, when our affections have fastened upon some transient object and we have lost it, "I will never let myself care so much again." Easter tells us that we may dare to care, let our affections take strong hold of all those with whom our lives are interwoven and because the bonds of love will never be broken. Easter assures us that there is room enough for hurt lives to be healed, broken lives to be mended, the things that get spoiled too soon to be recast. It proclaims another chance for perplexed and beaten men upon whose defeat the twilight of their brief lives has so darkly fallen.

Easter does not offer immortality as an anodyne for the stupidities and injustices of our world or relieve us from any endeavor from trying to correct them. But I do say that its shining roads and its blessed assurances are what God has given us to satisfy the last passion of our souls and deliver us from the last defeat. It is the

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witness of time enough and room enough, time enough to lay spaciouly life's foundations, for buildings which may require an eternity for their completion. Easter offers room enough to look beyond the foreground shadows and the fields of transient defeat; room enough to hope greatly, believe creatively, and find in all our sorrows the assurance that sundered lives will be reunited and broken lives be made whole again.

Take this with you: There is room enough and time enough. We cannot always be looking at the eternal horizon—there are too many immediate duties; but when you are puzzled or perplexed, when your hearts ache over the broken and unfinished, when you cannot see a road out through the confusions of any present time, when the scales of God's justice do not seem to balance, then lift your eyes to the Unseen and Eternal and let your questing passion pass in faith the unfolded portals of the tomb and anticipate its birthright in the eternal.

There is still another life beyond the horizons of time. Dr. Robert Freeman says:

“When men go down to the sea in ships,  
’Tis not to the sea they go;  
Some isle or pole the mariner’s goal,  
And thither they sail through calm and gale,  
When down to the sea they go.

When souls go down to the sea by ship,  
And the dark ship’s name is Death,  
Why mourn and wail at the vanishing sail?  
Though outward bound, God’s world is round,  
And only a ship is Death.

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When I go down to the sea by ship,  
And Death unfurls her sail,  
Weep not for me, for there will be  
A living host on another coast  
To beckon and cry, 'All hail!' "



II

*The Light Bringer*

---

JAMES STANLEY DURKEE

MINISTER, PLYMOUTH CHURCH  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

JAMES STANLEY DURKEE was born in 1866 at Carleton, Nova Scotia. He graduated from Bates College with the degrees of A.B. and A.M. He received the Ph.D. degree from Boston University. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him.

He was ordained in the Baptist ministry. He was pastor at Auburn, Me., and Roxbury, Mass. He was pastor of the South Congregational Church, Brockton, Mass. He was president of Howard University, Washington, D. C. He is now pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn.

He is well known in the ministry and is a fit successor of Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Abbott, and Newell Dwight Hillis.

He is the author of *God Translated, In the Footsteps of a Friend, In the Meadows of Memory*.

He is the "Friendly Voice of the Friendly Hour" over the radio.



## II

### THE LIGHT BRINGER

J. STANLEY DURKEE

*A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory  
of thy people Israel.*                      LUKE 2: 32.

PROF. MICHAEL PUPIN, in his truly great book *From Immigrant to Inventor*, traces the story of how he learned to answer his boyhood question, "What is light?" An interesting and fascinating story it is indeed. As we read that story, we are led along over the different theories of light as presented by the thinkers of the past. There is the theory of the luminiferous ether, the undulatory theory of light, and, at last, the electromagnetic theory. Through the matchless investigations of Faraday, Maxwell, and Helmholtz, the world has been taught that "sound is a vibration of matter and light is the vibration of electricity." What matter and electricity are in themselves are subjects occupying the scientific minds of this age. Evidently neither matter nor electricity is an entity in itself, but both are phenomena of some more fundamental relationships in the field of energy. The source of that fundamental energy is thus described by Professor Pupin: "The most complete picture of a chaos is our mental image of the non-coördinated motion of the molecules and atoms of a young white-hot star. Here we find a restless chaos of violent molecular collisions, which are the primordial source of cosmic energy."

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That wonderful poem, the nineteenth Psalm, puts into poetry a great scientific truth when it sings: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Star speaks to star while all things of the cosmos of God listen and know. Faraday's vision was that "all things are in perpetual contact with each other, every star feeling, so to speak, the heartbeat of every other star and of every living thing, even of the tiniest worms in the earth." This vision of the oneness of all things, of all life, pushes back our horizons to infinity. We get a new idea of the unity of God's work and its purpose. We can seem to see more clearly how God began with the simple and single life germ cell, and, using that as a unit, has been bringing on this marvelous complexity of life which reveals itself in the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, and in the lives of men and women. This thought illuminates more clearly that whole theory of the development of life from the simplest form to the most complex forms, which we have named Evolution. If we are thinking clearly, what we mean by Evolution is simply the pathway along which progress has come. The power directing or leading that progress is not connoted in the word Evolution. In the realm of Evolution we are dealing with science. In the realm of the cause, or causes, developing that process along the way known we are dealing with metaphysics and theology. In both fields the world is constantly seeking for new light in the new facts discovered and properly related.

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Being among the mountains I arose from my bed while it was yet dark, that I might see the miracle of the coming of light, and the sunrise among the peaks. Along the skyline was a bluish-gray light, wavering, swaying, holding, receding, battling for permanent place. But the sun had marshaled his battalions and was ready to carry the heights by assault. Along the peaks came a rosy glow. Spears of gold tipped the topmost spires of the mountain pinnacles. Then a charge of light horsemen swept along the ridges, and darkness was gone from the heights. Between sharp promontories, suddenly there flashed a great beam of splendor that touched to strange fire the crest of the mountains. The armies of light had put to flight the armies of darkness. Day had come and the night had fled away. The rosy dawn kisses the east into smiles. The night is gone! The darkness is fled! 'Tis light! 'Tis day!

The coming of light into a dark mind brings joy unspeakable. The famous example of that joy is the story told of Archimedes, who, upon discovering a method of determining the purity of gold in King Hiero's crown, cried out in ecstasy, "Eureka! Eureka! I have found it! I have found it!" It is interesting to note that this expression is the motto of the State of California.

I know of no gladness like that which follows the dispelling of darkness in the mind and the flooding in of light. To find the answer to that problem, to see the way one should take, to watch the door open and the light stream through, to find doubt gone and assurance stand-

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ing calmly there—these are experiences which glorify human living.

Is it not remarkable that the coming of light to one person often means the lighting of millions of pathways. When Mr. Edison succeeded in making that filament grow within a vacuum, he was preparing light for uncounted millions of people. When Abraham Lincoln uttered his famous sentence, "No nation can exist half slave, half free," he was pouring light into human minds for untold centuries to come. When Neil Dow exclaimed that no nation could exist half drunk, half sober, he, too, was pouring light on the pathways of men and nations for all the ages to be. When Lord Cecil, father and mother of the World Court and the League of Nations at Geneva, declared that either war must be abolished or civilization wiped out, he also was pouring in light which shall guide the thought of every statesman in the long eras of human development which lie before us. When Moses gave to the world those Ten Commandments, he gave ten lamps of social and religious guidance which shall never go out. Those lights will light up the dark pathways of men as long as pathways are trodden by mankind. When Galileo gave expression to his new theories in physics, he sent a beam down the ages which will guide every night flier on every bold venture into the unknown. When the switches were thrown in the heart of Martin Luther, and he read in the light of that brilliant illumination "The just shall live by faith," the darkness of old superstitions was gone, and henceforward men and women would walk, not in

ignorance and fear, but in the light of the freedom of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

The words of the text are a few of those overflowing words of old Simeon the prophet. How he caught the gleam, what soul-voice spoke to him, what western gates opened that he might look into the future with such clear vision, we may never know. The spiritually illumined soul is an enigma still. We have not a science of the spiritual that can note and classify the laws upon which can be builded a sure prognostication of what will happen under given circumstances. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

But Simeon did see and he did give expression to that wonderful vision. As he took the child up in his arms the effect was to turn the switch of the eternal and light up all the centuries which are to be. In that brilliant light he cried: "Here, here, here is He for whom the world has been waiting. The child shall grow to be the spiritual guide of all the ages before." "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

And what a light has come to the Gentiles through the teachings of this Jesus of Nazareth. The closer those teachings have been followed, the higher has been the civilization of men and women. Unconsciously the standard of the world to-day is the standard of the teaching of this Jesus. Whether men will or no, they bring their actions before him for judgment. The Gentile world has

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pushed forward to its marvelous development and power in accordance as it has laid hold on the teachings of Jesus.

But what a sorrowful thing it is that Israel has not received the glory that was meant to be hers, by the coming of Christ and the flashing of that light before the world! Israel has refused that light. Israel deliberately turned her back to it, and sought the ways not illumined by his presence and his teachings. Yet where the children of Israel have thrived most in the heart of the Gentile world, there that Gentile world has come nearest to a subjection to the teachings of Christ. Israel herself pays homage to this light flashing from Christ by thriving most in the conditions where that light is brightest.

And, too, is it not a remarkable thing that in those countries where the light of Christ is most widely diffused the very people who refuse that light cry out most loudly for more of it? Karl Marx had a great vision of the social equality of man, and how this equality might be brought about. He caught the vision in the land where the light of Christ was shining most brightly.

But he was as a man looking into the sun. So intense is the light that the eyes are blinded. Strangely indeed, Karl Marx turns from the very light he sought to build up a system that could have no light in it of the truly spiritual, forgetting all the while that "where there is no vision, the people perish." The cry of the great Psalmist, David, still echoes over the hills and plains of human existence, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

## JAMES STANLEY DURKEE

### THE WORLD'S LIGHT BRINGERS

Take this truth into the realm of discovery. Vasco de Gama sailed down the African coast, seeking a passage to India. At the southernmost point of the continent storms fought him back for weeks. But his dogged persistence won at last, and he rounded the Cape, sailing into the Indian Ocean and founding a new trade route. When back at home, he reported to the King of Spain the terrible battle with the seas at the Cape, and announced that he had named that promontory "The Cape of Storms." But the King, seeing the far-reaching results of his intrepid sailor's discovery, said, "Nay, call it the Cape of Good Hope"—and the Cape of Good Hope it remains to this day.

Joaquin Miller, our American poet, pictures Columbus dropping the Azores in the wake of his ships and sailing out over that uncharted and unknown western sea. He tells of the mutiny of the sailors and the agony of the officers, but tells also of the unquenchable spirit of the great leader himself.

David Livingstone would know the secrets hidden in the heart of that unknown continent of Africa. Echoes of the sufferings came to the coasts along the slave traders' trails. Strange black people of splendid physique and intelligence came out from a land of darkness and silence. Livingstone would know whence they came and what sorrows were theirs. So he plunged into that darkness, went alone and fearless, trusting in a people's God.

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“To lift the somber fringe of the night,  
To open lands long darkened to the light,  
To heal grim wounds and bring the blind new sight,  
Right faithfully wrought he!  
He came like light across the darkened land,  
And dying, left behind him this command,  
The door is open, so let it ever stand.  
Right mightily wrought he!”

Take this truth in the realm of science. Professor Pupin tells the story of how Faraday, Maxwell, Helmholtz, and scores of others followed from the known to the unknown, contacting with strange powers along the way, and finally giving to humanity the electric battery which has become a foundation of blessing so great that the imagination staggers before it even yet.

Follow the scientists in chemistry as they break up the elements into hitherto undreamed-of parts and recombine those parts according to learned formulæ, presenting to the world new colors, new remedies, new strength in material, new wonders of earth and heaven. The tar-barrel alone has revealed over nine hundred different shades of beauty, besides a multitude of other values for human life. The specialists in medicine and surgery have applied these findings to bodily ills and brought vast alleviation to human suffering.

The geologist has opened the leaves of the rocks to read there the story of life's beginnings and development. The biologist has followed back along the way of life to find strange developments, strange variations, strange persistencies, linking an unknown past to this present and to that unknown future.



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The archeologist has followed up from the cave dwellers, or retraced the way back from home builders, seeking to solve the enigma of human progress and development. In clearer light than ever before, we are reading the ways of God in his process of creation and growth. What a story is this fascinating story of life!

Take this truth in the realm of religion. Unknown dreamers of a long, dead past slowly, so slowly, formulated their theories of physical and spiritual relationships, giving them utterance in stories of creation, the fall of man, the flood, and all those great happenings of an infinite past. We read those stories in Persian literature written thousands of years before those unknown writers begin to speak in the matchless poems with which the Book of Genesis opens. By the time these Genesis writers sing, a new conception has flooded the minds of seers. There is one God, not many gods, and he is the creator of all things. What a revolution in human thought that utterance brought, "In the beginning God created." From the beginning of the Book of Genesis to the close of the Book of Revelation, we are constantly reading the names of light bringers. Abraham hears the voice of God in his soul and follows out to a strange country, there to become the father of a spiritual race through which should come "The Light of the World," Jesus Christ. Isaiah the prophet sees so deeply into the spiritual needs of the human race, that he can paint almost a portrait of the One who must come to satisfy those spiritual needs and lead the whole race forward in its spiritual quest. It is truly startling to note

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the spiritual comprehension of Isaiah as it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ himself. But the light bringer, supremest of all, is that same Jesus Christ. Standing under the great chandeliers of the temple, he could cry, "I am the light of the world." Preposterous as such a statement may have seemed at that time, subsequent ages prove the statement true. The more our present civilization absorbs his teachings, the more light shines upon its pathway. The real prophets of our day see but more brilliant light shining from him along the centuries to be, until humanity reaches its destined perfection. He is as a light "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we will find our pathway lighted through the valley of the shadows of death—clear through to the Home Eternal!

Examine critically every light-bringing agency of earth, every system devised by man, every contribution by men and women, and we shall find that Jesus Christ has given more light to dark minds and hearts than all others combined.

Heartily and well did John Monsell sing:

"Light of the world, we hail thee,  
Flushing the eastern skies!  
Ne'er shall the darkness veil thee  
Again from human eyes;  
Too long, alas! Withholden,  
Thou spread from shore to shore;  
Thy light, so glad and golden,  
Shall set on earth no more.

Light of the world, illumine  
This darkened earth of thine,

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Till everything that's human  
Be filled with the divine;  
Till every tongue and nation,  
From sin's dominion free,  
Rise in the new creation,  
Which springs from love and thee."

## NEED OF LIGHT BRINGERS

As civilization advances, more light is needed. Two great gifts of light for physical eyes have been given. One gift was from God and one from man. When God said, "Let there be light," day appeared in all its resplendent glory. When Thomas Edison said, "Let there be light," darkness fled away and the night became as the day.

Yet the light for physical eyes only is but the alphabet for human achievement. To combine those letters into words, and with the words create a literature that glorifies humanity, calls for light in the brains and souls of men. He who can light up the life of another and cause a mind to glow and a heart to see is the most needed of all men. As Carlyle says, "In every epoch of the world, the great event, parent of all others, is it not the arrival of a thinker in the world?"

But the truth of one age becomes the untruth of a following age. The thinker has flashed a light, new to himself and those of his time, and in that glow a generation has lived and wrought. Here and there, however, a few have applied this light to dark places, and they have become illuminated. Such places reveal that the original meaning was but partial truth; now larger revelations blot

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out the lesser shining. The old light is absorbed in the new. The old truth is outgrown in the new.

"The old order changeth, giving place to new,  
God fulfills himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom corrupt the world."

Jesus brought a new light to human relationships. Formerly men thought that to commit the actual act was murder. Jesus shows that murder and adultery and every sin is actually committed in the heart. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," was the old belief. Jesus shows that to resist evil with evil is deadly. "If thy brother smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." The fighting will be over by that time, if thy brother is a brother. A brute demands different treatment.

Men said, "Love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." Nay, said Jesus, love your enemy and make him your friend by your love.

These great truths were great new lights in a world of evil. Israel needed them; she was hurrying to her own destruction. Rome needed them: she was rotting to her doom. Jesus came preaching the doctrine of the Kingdom of God and prayed, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." To make of this earth a kingdom of righteousness, was his plea. To make the righteousness of God regnant on earth, was his plan. He came not to save men for heaven, but to save them for earth. He saw the need of a civic and social salvation here in this world. He demanded righteousness in the

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home, the church, and the state. It was because he condemned unrighteousness, and held up its ghastly corpse to view, that he drew upon himself the hate that finally murdered him under the sham of law. He did not die to get men to heaven; he died to get heaven to men.

Strange, is it not, how his teachings have been so corrupted as to reverse his whole order of thinking and planning? It was so hard to endure the bodily suffering necessary to destroy evil and cause good to reign in its stead, that men began to think of heaven in another world, as a place free from battling and suffering. They would endeavor to gain that heaven by shunning the battles here. They would renounce the world to gain a spiritual heaven beyond. They forgot that such a spiritual heaven could be gained only through battling to have a spiritual world here.

Ere long our theology became set to the idea that people must be saved out of this world rather than be saved in it. For centuries, generations strove to get to a spiritual heaven by "climbing up some other way." They strove to save their souls by hiding from the world, and in so doing shrunk their souls to a littleness that made them not worth the saving. But all the while that great prayer of Jesus was sending forth its invitation—"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

I profoundly believe in a spiritual heaven, but I know it can be attained only through earth battle. We cannot

"be carried to the skies  
On flowery beds of ease,  
While others fight to win the prize,  
And sail through bloody seas."

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I frankly believe that the size of my spiritual heaven will be in exact ratio to the size of my striving for heaven on earth. I may have a small room, or a large, according as I have builded here. I do love to think of that spiritual heaven, when I grow weary in the conflict here. Thoughts of that life rest me and nerve me to greater activity in this life. My other-worldliness is founded on my this-worldliness. I am sure of my spiritual heaven if I give all I have, or can get, to the service of God and man in bringing a real heaven here. If I follow Jesus Christ and fight through here, as did he, I am absolutely sure of my place "in my Father's house where there are many mansions."

Such truth is greatly needed to-day. The leaven of the gospel is working in human society as never before. It is often not recognized as gospel leaven. Men call it socialism, or human betterment, or brotherhood, or communism; but it is the leaven of the gospel of Christ. That leaven has found its way into the social order, and the old oppression of riches is being destroyed. It has found its way into the coal fields, into the steel trade, into the shipping circles, into bank meetings, and a strange restlessness is upon the world. Too long have we been calling "depression" what is really the casting away of "oppression." This new light must shine in our government life. Our cities, rotting in graft and greed and lawlessness, are spreading their contagion to state and nation. This new light must shine in our domestic life. The bonds of marriage have been loosened to convenience, and the sacred relations of the sexes, maintained for peopling the earth, have been rotted to what is termed "free love," which

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reeks with the smell of decayed virtue. This same truth must find larger expression in our religious life. We have built up our personal pride into barriers that divide people and accentuate our differences. The religion of Jesus Christ is a leveler of barriers and the destruction of separating walls. A denominationalism that puts those frowning walls between Catholic and Protestant, between Jew and Gentile, between Baptist and Methodist and Presbyterian and Congregationalist, is not the religion of Jesus Christ. These walls have been built by pride in human religion, not by the love which emanates from the heart of Jesus Christ. The closer we come to him, the more we find the barriers gone, for "He hath broken down the middle wall of partition."

The light bringers shall have many sorrows. Christian pastors and teachers and followers will grieve that their messages are ignored, disputed, or refused. They will watch men and women stumble on in darkness to defeat and death, when they might walk in the light and travel straight to their spiritual home eternal. They will encounter those who love darkness more than light, because their deeds are evil, and often will be defeated in the battle, for frequently the "children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." They will be stoned, sawn asunder, wander about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world is not worthy. Yet it is not the light bringers who will suffer when the torches are torn from their hands; it is those whose paths they would lighten.

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Such haters of the light thought to put out the light of Jesus Christ; they succeeded in tearing the veil in twain and letting in the glory beams of the eternal. They thought to silence him forever; but they gave him a sounding board that rings his messages clearer as the centuries go by. They thought to crucify him; they glorified him instead and made of that very cross a symbol of the greatest love, the greatest devotion, the greatest allegiance to truth that the children of men can ever know. He is indeed to-day and forever will be "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Gladly indeed and exultingly do we sing with John Henry Newman:

"Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom,  
Lead thou me on!  
The night is dark, and I am far from home;  
Lead thou me on!  
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene; one step enough for me."



III

*Conquering One's Doubts*

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JAMES GORDON GILKEY

MINISTER, SOUTH CHURCH, SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

JAMES GORDON GILKEY was born in 1889 at Watertown, Mass. He graduated from Harvard University with the degrees of A.B. and M.A. He studied in the Universities of Berlin and Marburg. He received the B.D. degree from Union Theological Seminary. Colgate University bestowed upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

He was ordained in the Presbyterian ministry, was assistant minister of Bryn Mawr Church, and has been pastor of South Church, Springfield, Mass., for many years. He is also Professor of Biblical Literature at Amherst College.

He is a trustee of the International Y. M. C. A. College at Springfield and is president of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra.

He is a regular college and university preacher at the Eastern colleges and universities.

He is the author of *A Faith for the New Generation*, *The Certainty of God*, *Secrets of Effective Living*, and *Problems of Everyday Living*.

He has been an inspiration to many young men and women.

### III

## CONQUERING ONE'S DOUBTS

JAMES GORDON GILKEY

*God drove Adam out of Eden, and at the east of the garden set cherubim with flaming swords to guard the tree of life.*

GENESIS 3: 24.

DID you ever study the details of the first picture in the Bible? A beautiful garden, with two human beings in it. In the center of the garden two magical trees. The fruit of one gives knowledge, the fruit of the other eternal life. One day the human beings violate God's command and eat the fruit of the first tree. God discovers what has happened, and is enraged and alarmed. What if these rebels should eat the fruit of the other tree as well? They have already gained knowledge. Then they would have immortality too. So in anger and fear "God drove Adam out of Eden, and at the east of the garden set cherubim with flaming swords to guard the tree of life." This is the scene with which the Bible opens. The tree of life is closely guarded. God is keeping immortality for himself.

What is the final picture in the Bible? A celestial city, with a crystal stream flowing through it. That stream is the river of the water of life. Anyone who drinks will be immortal. On either side of the stream magical trees are growing. They are trees of life, and their fruit gives immortality. Within the city is a great company, gath-

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ered from every tongue and tribe and kindred. Is God barring those people from the trees of life and from the water of life? Quite the contrary. Throughout the celestial city his voice sounds. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Why is there such a difference between the two pictures? Why does Genesis say that God drove Adam away from the tree of life, while Revelation says that to it he invites ten thousand times ten thousand? Because a long interval elapsed between the writings of those two books, and because during that period the conception of God changed profoundly. Men came to see that he is not selfish and that he is not jealous. They realized that he is loving and helpful, that he can be trusted to share immortality with his children. Thus the basic ideas of Genesis gave place to those of Revelation. The flaming swords vanished from the tree of life, and the tree was planted in the very center of the celestial city.

Have there been further changes in religious belief since the Bible was written? Of course. How could the situation be otherwise? Our knowledge has increased beyond all expectation, and this new wisdom has altered profoundly our theory of life, our conception of God, and our beliefs about immortality. You can discover what some of the changes are if you look again at the picture in Revelation. God gives, the author of the book says, a joyous immortality to part of the human race. But outside heaven is a vast throng of lost souls. There is no possible way by which they can gain entrance to the cele-

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tial city. They are not only excluded from heaven, but they are destined to suffer throughout eternity excruciating torment. The author writes grimly: "As for the craven, the faithless, and the abominable; as for murderers, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars of all sorts, their lot is the lake that blazes with fire and brimstone." Throughout the Middle Ages that gruesome detail remained in one corner of the picture. Then a few courageous and intelligent men, chiefly the Universalist ministers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, began to question the theory of eternal damnation for any member of the human race. If God is a God of love, will he ever be guilty of such immense cruelty? If love is the strongest power in the world, can it not be trusted to win its way? When men began to ask those questions the picture of God in the book of Revelation began to fade just as, centuries before, the picture of God in the book of Genesis had faded. In its place men began to draw a new picture. As time went on the new picture was accepted by more and more people, and to-day it is regarded as true by literally millions of Christians. Tennyson phrased the new faith in two of the finest stanzas of "In Memoriam":

"Oh yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That not one life shall be destroy'd  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete."

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There is the stage of religious thought beyond the book of Revelation. It maintains that God gives victory over death to more than a few. It says he leads everyone, literally everyone, to the tree of life.

When we discuss the problem of conquering doubt we must recall this progress in religious ideas. No modern liberal pretends to defend the beliefs which were outgrown twenty or even two centuries ago. What we are concerned with are the new and more intelligent convictions which have supplanted those our ancestors knew. Curiously enough, many critics of modern religion overlook the fact that there has been this immense change. They ask, with evident condescension, whether we preachers are still discussing the date of the end of the world. They inquire whether we are intrigued by the prospect of such a heaven as the book of Revelation describes. They forget that modern Christianity has moved beyond the teaching of Revelation, just as Revelation moved beyond the teaching of Genesis. Our modern beliefs, as they relate to the subject of immortality, might be summed up in four statements. First, we believe that at the heart of things there is a living, loving God. In his sight human beings are infinitely precious, far too precious to be destroyed. This is a belief we share with Jesus; and because it lies at the basis of our convictions as it lay at the basis of his we call ourselves Christians, followers of Jesus. Second, we believe that this loving God initiated the vast growth-process which we term the process of evolution. It called our earth into being, then brought forth the lower forms of organic life, and finally produced

the human race. This knowledge we gain from modern science. It was of course unknown to Jesus. Third, we believe that the purpose of our existence on the earth is the development of the mental and spiritual powers hidden within each of us. God has put us here with deliberate intent—that we may learn to think, to achieve, to understand and help each other. In this development of wise and kindly character, this perfecting of personality, we find the meaning and purpose of our present existence. Finally, we believe that beyond death a new life opens before every human being. We shall begin that second phase of our endless growth with the mental and spiritual equipment gained during the first phase. If, thanks to struggle and self-discipline, we win here a fine and noble self, that self will be our imperishable possession in the eternity ahead. If we gain here only a wretched, half-ignorant self, we shall be that much handicapped as we face the new existence. After death, as after to-night's sleep, each of us will wake with exactly the same character and personality he had before. Eternal life is not a boon which God may grant or deny after we die. Eternal life is ours already. It is the inalienable birthright of every human being. It began, for us all, the moment we came into the world.

Over against the beliefs of modern religion stand the entirely different beliefs of modern skepticism. The skeptics deny all four of the convictions we have just mentioned. See how sharp the contrast is between the two views of life and history! First, the skeptics maintain there is no God at the heart of things. Rather, they

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say, human beings are utterly alone in an alien, uncaring universe. Second, the skeptics maintain that the evolutionary process originated in sheer coincidence. At a certain instant millions of years ago the total situation happened to be exactly right, and the vast life-process of which the human race is the unforeseen end-product started itself. A purposeful God had nothing to do with it. Third, the skeptics claim there is no meaning in the presence of human beings on the earth. Men and women are, the skeptics say, only tiny and insignificant fragments of organic matter which stir for an instant of cosmic time before they are dissolved back into the chemical elements from which they were originally and fortuitously compounded. Finally, the skeptics assert there is no such thing as the survival of individual personalities after death. They admit that a man's influence may survive, and that in the case of a great man it may endure for centuries. They confess that if a man leaves children, and they in turn leave children, that the man lives on in his descendants. But that the man himself, apart from his influence and his offspring, endures as a self-conscious personality—that the skeptics flatly deny. How does the world appear to the men who adopt these views? Bertrand Russell says: "We see, surrounding our narrow raft illumined by the flickering light of human comradeship, the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour. From the great night without, a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge. All the loneliness of humanity, caught amid hostile forces, is concentrated on the individual soul, which must struggle—with what courage it



can command—against the whole weight of a universe that cares nothing for its hopes and fears.” It is between these two views of life, one offered by modern religion, and the other offered by modern skepticism, that our generation is called upon to choose.

In a large congregation there are, undoubtedly, many people who are not concerned over this choice. They are content to eat and sleep, work and play, and let questions about the meaning of life stand aside. There are still other people who are not troubled by modern doubt. Years ago they won a firm religious faith, and the theories of modern skepticism seem to them meaningless. But there are some of us who are in an entirely different position. We cannot go through life without wondering why we are here and whither we are bound. We want to believe in the splendor and permanence of human personalities, but again and again we are overwhelmed by uncertainty. What if our Christian faith is, as the skeptics say, only a glittering dream, a wish-fancy that makes an otherwise intolerable existence halfway endurable? What if we are, as modern skepticism declares, miserable insects crawling from one annihilation to another? When a man finds himself in that quandary he wants one type of help on Easter Sunday. He wants to learn how to conquer doubt, how he can master the mood of cynicism and despair. What can we say to him?

As we face this problem of conquering doubt, there is one fact we should bear clearly in mind. There are as many difficulties involved in accepting modern skepticism as there are in accepting modern religious faith. This is

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a fact which bewildered individuals, particularly bewildered young people, often forget. They fancy that if they stopped trying to believe in God, trying to believe in the significance of human life, and trying to retain faith in immortality, their intellectual difficulties would be at an end. Nothing of the kind is true. These individuals would merely exchange one set of puzzles for another. They would then find themselves beset by moments of faith, as they are now beset by moments of doubt. Suppose you say there is no God, and that the world-process originated in a gigantic fluke. The orderliness of the universe raises an immediate protest. How could such perfect order as microscopes and telescopes disclose be the product of blind energy working fortuitously on inert matter? Suppose you say that human beings are insignificant fragments of organic matter, "bundles of cellular material on the path to decay." The character of every fine person you know rises in denial. There was something in Socrates, something in Jesus, something in your mother which chemical analysis cannot capture and cannot disclose. Suppose you say that death is the end of everything, and the ancient faith in the renewal of life is only a dream. You see the Easter flowers, and you begin to wonder. What if people do live again, after all? To deny the brave things men have believed does not solve our intellectual problems. It means merely that we exchange a life of faith interrupted by doubt for one of doubt interrupted by faith. Years ago Browning stated this fact in singularly vivid phrases.

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"How can we guard our unbelief?  
Just when we're safest there's a sunset-touch,  
A fancy from a flower-bell, someone's death,  
A chorus-ending from Euripides,  
And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears,  
As new and old at once as Nature's self,  
To rap and knock and enter in our soul,  
Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,  
Round the ancient idol on his base again,  
The Grand Perhaps!"

Some of us, realizing that final and demonstrable proof is—in either case—impossible, are ready to trust our hopes rather than our fears. We are willing to believe the best rather than the worst about life, and take the consequences.

After we have recognized this situation we find there are several definite things we can do to bolster our faith in the significance and permanence of human lives. To begin with, we can remind ourselves that there are a great many situations in which we are forced to act on the basis of reasonable certainty rather than that of demonstrated fact. Consider the record of your own life. When, in youth, a man chooses his career he is compelled to make a bewildering venture. No one can demonstrate that he will prove to be a skillful physician, a resourceful salesman, an effective public speaker. All a young man can do when he chooses a career is establish a reasonable certainty, and then begin preparing for the work that lies ahead. When he decides in what community he will live he faces a similar difficulty. No one can prove that a certain city will give him the response, the opportunity, and the happiness he craves. All a young man can do is

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study the situation, determine what the prospects seem to be, and then act accordingly. Marriage represents, of course, the greatest venture of all. No third party can demonstrate that the girl a young man loves will measure up to his expectations. Certainly no third party can prove to a girl that the young man she loves will, through the long years ahead, prove worthy of her trust. All two young people can do is establish, through a period of some months or years, a reasonable certainty about each other. Then a day comes when, on the basis of probability rather than established fact, they must begin life together. Repeatedly we are forced to make these ventures—not blindly, but with the light of intelligence and courage shining only part way down the road. Why should we be surprised when, as we try to make an interpretation of existence, this same situation develops? Why should we be unwilling to follow in the domain of belief the same course of action we follow repeatedly in the domain of life choices?

In our moments of doubt we can also recall the encouraging fact that thousands of our contemporaries, and highly intelligent people too, share the high view of life. These men and women are thoroughly familiar with the problems modern science thrusts before the mind, and they have faced the alternative between Christian faith and modern skepticism. How it heartens us to find, everywhere in the modern world, people who have made their way through this darkness to a sure and radiant belief! Listen to Dr. Little, until recently president of the University of Michigan: "The death of my own

parents within a day of each other completely wiped out earlier bases for a belief in immortality, and replaced them with an indescribable but completely convincing realization that there is such a thing. Such experiences are, I realize, not transferable. But they are probably the most sacred and the most comforting realizations known to any of us." Or listen to Professor Darrach, dean of the Medical School at Columbia University: "The continued influence of those who have departed this life, and the sense of the continuing existence of their personalities, have been strong enough to remove for me all doubt as to some form of life after death. What it is, or in what form it consists, I care not. But I do believe that those who are gone continue to exist, and I believe we can be influenced by them." Granted that in this matter of the interpretation of life each one of us must find his own belief, his own path to inward assurance. Granted that educated people may be, and often are, deceived. There still are some of us who, caught in a mood of doubt and cynicism, turn our thought to the wisest and noblest people we know. We remind ourselves that they have faced these same questions, grappled with these same difficulties, and finally decided that there is enough evidence to warrant faith in God, faith in the significance of human beings, and faith in life beyond death. When our own vision fades we thank God for the clear and steady sight of these other eyes. When our own courage falters we listen to the brave song that rises from these other lips. Repeatedly we make our way through a region of darkness and doubt

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by following the steps of these other pilgrims whose courage is greater and whose step steadier than our own.

But the surest road to inward conviction lies elsewhere. The next time you find yourself wondering whether the brave beliefs of Christianity are true, think deeply about the character of God. That there is a God few reflective people will deny. On every side we find evidences of a Great Mind and a Great Power within the universe. That Mind and Power are what we mean by God. Can we learn anything about God's character. Consider this analogy. A shipwrecked sailor is cast on a tiny island in the South Seas. In the midst of the palm trees growing on the shore he sees a dwelling. He makes his way eagerly to the house, but the owner is nowhere on the premises. While that sailor is waiting for the owner to appear can he learn anything about him? The sailor notices that the walls of the room are covered with paintings. On an easel near the window he sees a half-finished picture. What can he reasonably conclude about the occupation of the man he has not seen? On the table in that room is a pile of books and pamphlets, one lying wide open with a pair of spectacles beside it. When the sailor examines these books and pamphlets he discovers that all of them are in German. What can he conclude about the man who was reading them a few moments previously? The sailor himself happens to be a German, and eagerly he studies the publications on the table. Each one, curiously enough, deals with the same subject—the trees and the flowers of the South Sea Islands. What can the sailor infer about the intellectual interests

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of the man who brought the books from Germany? As yet the sailor has not seen the man at all. But he has begun to gain, through a process of logical inference, a significant understanding of the type of person who will presently appear.

When we want to learn something about the character of God we follow the same procedure. Here we are, puzzled castaways on a tiny island lost in measureless seas of Space. Many situations impel us to believe that Someone Else is here with us, though as yet we have not seen Him. As we study the world this Unseen Comrade has called into being we discover that it makes consistent and significant impressions on the mind. It is a world shot through and through with intelligence, a world crammed with beauty, a world in which love, loyalty, and sacrificial kindness emerge everywhere. What does such a world tell us about the God who made it and who dwells unseen within its walls? He must be intelligent, he must appreciate beauty, he must have a heart of love. What would such a God do for and with the human beings who have finally entered his dwelling? He would do for them what modern Christianity says he would. He would surround us with his love and care. He would put meaning, purpose, and possibilities of splendor into our existence here. He would open before us all that life-beyond-death which our eager minds and our half-satisfied hearts so deeply crave. These great convictions are not blind, unfounded guesses. They are reasoned conclusions, made by the human spirit at its best.





IV

*The Unhidden Christ*

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EDWIN HOLT HUGHES

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EDWIN HOLT HUGHES was born in 1866 at Moundsville, W. Va. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan with the degrees of A.B. and M.A. He received the S.T.B. degree from Boston University. The honorary degrees of D.D., S.T.D., and LL.D. have been conferred upon him by various colleges and universities.

He was ordained in the Methodist ministry. He was pastor at Newton Center, Mass., and Malden, Mass. He was president of De Pauw University.

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He is a popular speaker at seminaries and universities.

He is the author of *A Boy's Religion, The Bible and Life, God's Family, Christianity and Success.*

## IV

### THE UNHIDDEN CHRIST

EDWIN HOLT HUGHES

*He could not be hid.*

LUKE 7: 24.

It is interesting, at the outset, to note the differing translations of these words as they appear in well-known versions. Weymouth has them, "He could not escape observation." Goodspeed renders them, "He could not keep it secret." Moffatt phrases them, "He could not escape notice." All the new puttings depart from a certain simplicity in the King James Bible, the ancient being the only one that keeps to monosyllables. But the general idea in all the versions remains the same—that there was then something about Christ that defied concealment; an inevitable publicity so insistent that it came unsought; an inner something that demanded an outer bulletin; a radiance so great that no midnight of circumstances could hold it in darkness; a sun which clouds could not cast into shadows.

It is always interesting to note how the local and temporary references to our Redeemer escape from small places and from brief hours to inhabit the world and the centuries. The text itself is a fascinating instance. Christ had been in his own country. If his coming there had excited curiosity, his stay had excited amazement. The people had been astonished at his language. This carpenter's son had never gone to earthly schools, had

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never traveled the roads of old-time culture, had never associated with the great scholars. All the channels along which wisdom flows seemed to run away from this strange man's life; and the people could only ask in wonderment, "Whence hath this man wisdom, having never learned?" His very speech taxed all their theories about him. In Gennesaret it had been much the same. To quote the quaint words of Moffatt, "The people at once recognized Jesus; and they hurried all around the district." The miracles of healing, which Harnack himself declared could not be waved away by an unbelieving hand, grew to convincing numbers and became even troublesome advertisements. His path was lined with cots until the fields became a vast, open-air hospital. He himself was smitten by piteous appeals. The streets suffocated him with their pressure of sorrow.

He passed into the North country, but his fame had gone faster than himself. Within the far coasts of Tyre and Sidon he needed no official herald to proclaim his coming. The great wave of human anguish rolled to his feet and moaned its way toward his heart. The regiments of helpless soldiers, wounded in life's battles, crawled painfully toward him and besought his mercy. His body felt the strain, and he must have rest. He slipped quietly into a house, and shut the door, and said, "Tell no man where I am." He sought a respite that he might come forth again to put out plenteously his sympathy and power. But there was no door that could stand against the importunate presence of human need. There was no curtained window that could hide him from ap-

pealing eyes. Suffering battered down the door, and want broke through the window; and they find him out again. The word is, "He went into a house, and would have no man know it; but *he could not be hid.*"

How that brief sentence itself declines to be hid! Spoken about an hour, it has meaning for all time. Spoken with reference to a house, it has significance for the world. Spoken of the clamorous need of one soul, it has a lesson for all humanity. We are obliged to lift the statement away from that one coast; from that one moment; from that one dwelling; from that one person—because that winged truth goes out into all lands, down into all ages, before all homes, and into all hearts. The local and temporary statement of fact becomes a universal and everlasting parable—a parable whose chief contention is that all attempts to hide Christ from the search of longing souls are utterly vain. He is not only the unhidden Christ; he is the "unhidable" Christ.

## I

We may begin with the claim that Christ could not be hid even before he came to Bethlehem. He was so much needed by the world that long prior to his earthly birth that need expressed itself in prophecy. Many heralds went before the approaching monarch to cry out, "The King comes! Long live the King!" Some of these heralds walked so far ahead of his chariot that the distance between them and him seems pathetically long. None the less they heard the far-off footsteps and caught brief glimpses of the oncoming glory. We do not now discuss

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the precise nature of their prophecy. We may not say how distinctly they realized the type of his kingdom. We do not know how accurately they beheld the form of his royal Person. Doubtless there has often been a tendency to exaggerate the element of foretelling and to find a meaning for uncertain details. But this we know surely: Christ could not be hidden before he came in the flesh. His forerunners had made the world's heart tremulous and expectant. As men watch for the rising of the sun at the end of the weary night, so did men look for him.

The illustration of the morning's coming is so apt that men have seized it eagerly and used it constantly. Before the sun rises on the cold and dark world, it pushes its foregleams into the sky, and the watchmen see the promise of the dawn. Shafts of light ascend the heavens. A thousand Jacob's ladders appear to a dreaming race. The east takes on a hopeful view. The birds flutter from their shelters and sing a welcome. Myriad voices break out into the chorus, "The morning cometh." It was thus when the Sun of Righteousness arose on the night and winter of the spiritual world. The faithful watchmen on the towers of hope turned toward the East. God cleared their vision and they beheld glints of his dawn. The Day-Star shone upon some souls in the nighttime. The secret of his coming was so great that the heavens could not hold it, and eager messengers whispered into devout hearts some tidings of the advancing morn. Men may debate the nature of prophecy; they may disagree as to its extent; but the assured fact abides that the Hebrew heart was on the lookout for its Messiah. The highest honor

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of Jewish motherhood was to be the privilege of touching his tiny hands and of crooning a lullaby over Isaiah's Servant of God. When the future held him still, down yonder in spaces vast and unknown, "He could not be hid."

## II

At his coming to the Bethlehem manger, it was even so again—an illustration of the fact that the world cannot easily hide its own Sun. Taking the accounts much as they stand, and leaving to the critical the privilege of reducing the stories for themselves, the irreducible minimum contains its own marvel. The decree of the Emperor drives an expectant mother to a wee village, and crowds its inn until she is compelled to rest her weariness and meet her pain in the stable-cave. This king was born in no palace; but he could not be hid. The manger was unlike a throne; but he could not be hid. The swaddling clothes were not as royal purple; but he could not be hid. He gave the name of his birthplace to a star and hung that star in the perpetual sky. He took the song of the heavens and put it on the lips of a million earthly choirs. He pulled to himself out of all pastoral lands the brooding shepherds of the fields. He persuaded toward himself throngs of wise men only to make them wiser still. The evidences at his birth, however literally construed, are not so amazing as the countless evidences since his birth—evidences which tell of his coming into the ever-extending life of humanity.

Yet all this is in spite of the fact that the place and

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manner of his birth appeared like a drama of concealment. Can the world ever find him there amid the lowly beasts, lying upon the hay, covered by the coarse garments, sleeping upon the breast of the poor and humble mother? Can it hear the voice of a Babe amid the confusion of moving caravans and the boisterous calls of pilgrims? It did find, and it did hear. Bethlehem and the Stable were good hiding places, but they were not equal to hiding him. Phillips Brooks states it truly—

“O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee to-night.”

Therefore, in Chicago, and New York, and San Francisco, and London, and Paris, and Constantinople, and Rome—in truth, in all the great cities of the planet—the song of Bethlehem is sung because a little child could not be hid.

### III

After Bethlehem, He could not be taken from the world's sight. Study the record again and discount it as you please, but deal faithfully with the residuum. The reckless Herod pronounced his decree of butchery. The wee children were hidden in their graves and thus became what Prudentius called the “blossoms of martyrdom.” But there was one Babe that could not be placed in an



unknown grave. Some kind of an angel said it and led the way into some kind of an Egypt. The country of the Nile had no waters that were deep enough to drown him; no deserts that were vast enough to envelop him; no siroccos turgid enough to smother him; no Sphinx silent enough to keep his secret; no Pharaoh powerful enough to take the scepter from an infant's hand. Out of all kinds of Egypts God called his Son that the hiding of his glory should be made manifest in the whole earth.

The conspiracy of happenings for the secreting of Christ continued. If events could have gotten together to plan certainly for shutting him from the world's eyes, how could they have done better? He was carried back into little and despised Nazareth. As it was not great David's town, perhaps it would succeed in doing what Bethlehem appeared unable to do—draw the curtains of obscurity about a Boy and bury him in its own insignificance. Since the village had won for itself a proverb of contempt, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" perhaps it could now redeem itself in the esteem of wicked silencers, if it saw to it that the Best Thing came not out at all! For twelve years the Sun it obscured. Then it flashes for a moment before the doctors in the Temple, but sinks down again behind the Galilean hills to remain in apparent eclipse for long years more. We call them "the hidden years," the years of obscurity. But the searching eye can see a carpenter shop; the listening ear can hear the sound of a hammer; the attentive heart can discern strange communings. Those voiceless years still tell their story—the story of the sacredness of filial obe-

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dience, of symmetrical growth, of honest toil. So it was that a derided town, and a poor cottage, and a rough shop, and a workman's garb did not screen him from the gaze of the world. The final herald came at last, a man who had one work to do, one message to give, one Person to proclaim—crying out insistently, "There cometh One after me." "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Get ready for the King." Jesus came forth from Nazareth village to journey to Jerusalem and to make the capital of his people's hearts the center and joy of the whole earth.

### IV

Men still say that geography is a great factor in history. Doubtless place has obscured more than one large life. Yet there lived One who could not be hidden by a gazeteer! He spent his brief active years on earth in a small and distant province, quite away from the beaten paths of travel, and in size about like one of our smallest American commonwealths. He did not dwell in what men would call a "pivotal state" from which the candidates for honor and rulership are usually selected. His own people were in political bondage, their monarch being appointed by a foreign power. It would seem that the stage on which Jesus moved was only a miniature, as if the leading actor in the world's supreme drama could never be beheld from afar. Can men in the rest of the world look over the tops of those Galilean mountains and see him? Or will he have some strange power of staying there in body, and of traveling everywhere in spirit? Both questions may be answered with affirmatives—especially the second. The

rocks and mountains of his native section could not confine him. Assuredly it could be said that the old prophet's figure of speech was truer—that a Rock cut out of one of those mountains without hand came at length to fill the whole earth.

As it was with geography, so was it also with the more subtle process of concealment. Men still ask, "How came it that Christ has such slight mention in the contemporary literature of his day? Why did not Seneca and others speak of him?" The questioners should be careful lest the weapon of their argument cut their own hands. Granting freely that there was no literary conspiracy and that the writers of the time did not deliberately plan an omission, it is still true that they could not hide him by their silence. One portion of his credential is this: That leaving no personal books to the world, and bequeathing to men only that unknown manuscript written on the forgetful sands of the earth, he has still escaped from the hiding of his own silence and has become the largest figure in literary publicity. If we widen our inquiry, we only widen our marvel. Cæsar builded an empire, and you could hear the tramping of his legions both on continents and in commentaries. Alexander built an empire, and you could hear the pounding of his colossal hammers to the rims of the known earth. They were noisy builders, or vociferous destroyers! But Jesus built in quietness. No thundering regiments made known the Captain of Salvation. His Temple, like that of Solomon, was erected without the sound of tools! Truly the argument does turn against its users. The silent builder builded more and better than

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did the prophets of noise. The penless Man evoked a literature that has carried his fame to the uttermost parts of the earth. The world is now, for the most part, silent about the authors who were silent about him. In the absence of contemporary literary mention, "He could not be hid."

### V

So violence tried its power where silence failed. Social and institutional force sought to put him out of the world's sight. Scribes and Pharisees brought their religious influence to bear upon the minds of the people and sought to entomb him in their prejudices, and to conceal him beneath their scorn. They turned verbal powers against him, called him names, identified his good deeds with evil spirits, charged him with insanity, poured upon him accusations of blasphemy. But he emerged the more through all their words, and they found that, in spite of the vocabularies of abuse, "He could not be hid."

They were driven finally to the last resource of the desperate. Since all else seemed to be failing they turned to physical violence. Without the walls of Jerusalem they erected a Cross. Upon rude beams of wood they placed his form. As if more surely to put him beyond the gaze of men they put a thief on either side, even as they placed Roman soldiers in front. Yet the very men that were intended to hide him began to reveal him. The penitent thief called him Lord. The centurion said, "Truly this was the Son of God." Some of the persecutors themselves became involuntary preachers and cried out the un-

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intended but blessed truth, "He saved others." The hill upon which they placed their deadly tree began to lift itself, until it became the highest mountain peak in all the earth. The crowds had gone back to the city, saying, "Now we have thrust him away, and men shall not see him more." How mistaken they were! Calvary looked like the final hiding place! Instead, it became the final revealing place! He himself had said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." O holy prophet of thine own passion, what wondrous truth thou didst thus speak! In the Acts of the Apostles there is a peculiar and penetrating statement that may not accurately bear this interpretation, "to whom he showed himself alive after his passion." On the Cross Jesus came to the most sublime revenge of the ages! The hiding act became the revealing drama! By the most marvelous magic in the world's long history the dark Cross became a radiant throne. Directly millions began to sing—

"In the Cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime."

We march into the very darkness of Golgotha itself that we may the more surely proclaim, "He could not be hid."

The effort of the Cross was supplemented by the effort of the Grave. Dead men tell no tales if only you can keep them buried. The tomb is often an effective hiding place. Scores of lives, unknown to us all, lie buried yonder; thousands of secrets are folded beneath the sod. They took the

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body of Christ away and laid it in the granite prison. Over the doorway they rolled a rock so vast that it needed no cement. Around about they stationed the Roman soldiers who dared not sleep on duty lest they themselves should sleep in quickly made graves. They looked at the triple security of that Arimathean cave and said: "Now we have hidden him. How can men find one who is buried?" An unseen hand broke the seal of the tomb; an unseen form passed the diligent sentry; and the One who had been put beyond publicity in the very midnight of the earth came forth to stand in the glare of a world and to say, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." It was not possible for him to be holden or hidden of death. Born in a cave which could not conceal him, he was buried in a cave which could not hide him. Above a manger, and above a desert, and above a cottage, and above a shop, and above a village, and above a province, and above a Church, and above a State, and above a Cross, and above a Tomb, we write with growing emphasis, "He could not be hid."

## VI

Coming back for a time and standing in the company of his own, he broke at length the dome of the sky and went up through the clouds over Bethany. Is it not merely the exchange of an upper grave for a lower? Will not the blue of that high ocean sink him into the invisible and forgotten? It does not so prove. His going seemed to insure his wider coming. Ascending on high he led cap-

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tivity the more captive and from spiritual heights gave greater gifts to men. He moved the center of worship from Jerusalem and placed it everywhere, as if he were giving the fullest meaning to his promise to the sinful woman at the well and had for all ages delocalized prayer and devotion. Beyond all skies, denser than the density of impenetrable mist, "He could not be hid."

Since he himself had gone beyond the reach of their fury, his enemies turned their attention to his followers. They put his witnesses rapidly to death so that they might not appear for him before the court of the world. They killed all save one of the Twelve Apostles, thinking that, if they could hide them, they would hide him too. Around martyr fires they boasted, "We shall conceal his messengers in the flames, and so shall we conceal him." Their very first attempt failed. Thinking to hide the face of Stephen, they only revealed the face of Christ, until the holder of their clothes became the possessor of the seamless robe. The first martyrdom gave Him the greatest Apostle. Thomas Fuller's comment on the death of Wycliffe, and of the later madness that exhumed his body and cast his ashes on the "little river," needed no poetic license when made over into verses—

"The Avon to the Severn runs,  
The Severn to the Sea,  
And Wycliffe's dust is scattered far,  
Wide as its waters be."

This represents the history of all attempts to hide Christ by the hiding of his confessors. The proverb, "The blood

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of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," has behind it a long history which proves that in the houses of a million deaths Jesus Christ could not be buried. Not only did he come out of his own grave in radiant power, but he has so emerged from the graves of his followers until the records have been compelled to note that, whether in the arena where the lions roared, or in the prisons where instruments of torture wrought, or at the stakes where flames made their terrible requiem, he brought back again into fresh and tragic meaning the incidental word of the gospel, "He could not be hid."

## VII

If these coarser brutalities have never availed to put Christ beyond observation, it is equally true that other forms of efforts, supposedly more refined, have failed. What Julian the apostate could not do with the sword, Celsus could not do with the pen. When physical persecution had proved itself a limitless folly, and even a reaction in favor of his faith, arguments took up the contest against him. Yet somehow he produced more books than his enemies—more powerful books too. Wherever he went libraries and colleges went; and the more free his path the more certain they were to come. It was not a Celsus who gave us Harvard and Yale and William and Mary! When men sought to hide Him beneath pamphlets and books, he seemed to come near to changing John's magnificent hyperbole into literary fact: "There are many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they could be written, every one, I suppose that not even the world



could contain the books that should be written." From amid all their literature he emerges, while they themselves find their own contentions concealed beneath the literature that he stimulated. Even here we have a right to repeat the refrain, "He could not be hid."

Beyond this, the variations of these victorious monosyllables are almost endless. When institutionalism sought to hide him and to claim a mighty monopoly of his grace and power, he broke from an ecclesiasticism made of iron and started Luther to singing—

"And though this world, with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us;  
We will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim—  
We tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo! his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him."

Where ecclesiasticism was foiled, sacerdotalism in yet another way could not hold him in the hiding of forms. Could not altars, and incense, and bells, and uniforms, and proclamations of magic make a grave more dangerous than that of Joseph's cave? But Calvin, and Robinson, and Wesley, and a hundred and one Mayflower pilgrims cried out, "Loose him and let him go"—and a historical miracle greater than that of Lazarus, or of his own physical conquest of the grave, proved once more that "He could not be hid."

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### VIII

It remains now to ask the question, Why has it been impossible to hide Christ? Why did all efforts fail—the proclamation of Cæsar, the decree of Herod, the manger cradle, the width of Egypt, the contempt of Nazareth, the obscurity of Judea, the scorn of the Pharisees, the hideousness of the cross, the depth of a tomb, the height of a sky, the martyrdom of his believers, the arguments of the skeptical, the authority of ecclesiasticisms, the superstitions of sacerdotalism—why did they all fail to hide Christ? Doubtless the incident that evoked the text tells us why. “He could not be hid” because he was needed. When he went into that house and closed the door and shut himself into its secrecy, there was one in the throng who needed him so much that she could not have defeat. “He could not be hid, for a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet.” Having learned of his sympathy and power, she penetrated to his hiding place, and the very room that was his hiding became his revealing. The world has moved on for nearly nineteen hundred years, but it has never found that the past, over which it claims its flattering improvement, has been able to conceal the Lord. Moderns, we seek an Ancient One. Occidentals, we seek an Oriental. Scientists, we seek a Mystic. You cannot permanently hide him behind the shifting opinions of laboratories; neither can you hide him beneath the scornful and smart phrases of American and English intelligentsia. We believe that we can make for him what some

of the more thoughtful would call a greater claim. Secularism and materialism cannot hide him. We may pile our dangerous treasures high about him, until the followers of Simon Magus may seem about to accomplish what the followers of Demetrius could not achieve. But you cannot forever hide Christ in commercial vaults. Some day he will snap their bolts and commandeer their contents by his gracious persuasion. In every Christmas season the streets are filled with those who go on his kindly errands. In spite of all that we may say about a formal and conventional Christmas, Bethlehem for the time is greater than Chicago, or Boston, or New York. Jesus is not wholly concealed by the millions of parcels and bundles with which our mails are burdened. His very name is written into the day—Christmas, *Christ-mass*! In some vast measure he flings his glory down long centuries and across great seas. The house in the North Coasts could not hide him; neither can the modern world. Our need of him is too great. We are weary, and he promises rest. We are sorrowful, and he promises consolation. We are transient, and he promises eternal life. We are sinful, and he promises strength. We need him! We need him; and because our souls know their own there is no hiding place for the Son of Man and Son of God. And, as was the case there in the regions of Tyre and Sidon, our children need him. The devils that threaten them can be conquered only by his power. Like that ancient parent, we will seek him and find him, that we may see the new generation, claimed by his sanity, his grace, his

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strength, his love. We change the tense of the text and say it in unwavering confidence, "He cannot be hid."

And yet! And yet! And yet! Is this all? Is everything the story of his escape? Let us see. We have said that he is the Sun of Righteousness. Who can pluck God's central light out of its place? A candle may be hid under a bushel. A small hand may break the current that feeds the electric flame. A wee cloud may dim the gleam of a star. But what covering can hide the sun? What hand can stop the flow that gives its radiance? What clouds can shut out its shining from the earth? After rains, and mists, and snows have done their most, after a pall has lain for days over a darkened world, the final victory is with the sun.

But is it necessarily so with you, O brother of mine? Christ will not hide himself from you. Will you hide yourself from Christ? Sometimes we must all think that the change in the scientific doctrine of astronomy is a symbol of the change in theological faith. In the Ptolemaic days men said that winter and night came because the sun turned away from the earth; in the Copernican days we are assured that night and winter come because the earth turns away from the sun. Is it so, O soul of mine? Can I in a measure blot out the sun by shutting my eyes and living in self-imposed blindness? Can I prove that I love darkness rather than light, and seek some self-created dungeon into whose triple midnight the light of Christ can scarcely come? Can he visit my town where another eager soul finds him, and captures the radiance of his healing love for herself and her children, while I, by

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stubborn refusals, make for myself a hidden Lord? Even so! Even so! Verily then there is need for that prayer of Wesley, perhaps unhappily omitted from the later Hymnal—the one that begins, “Christ, whose glory fills the sky”—

“Visit then this soul of mine;  
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
Fill me, Radiancy divine;  
Scatter all my unbelief;  
More and more thyself display,  
Shining to the perfect day.”

For every soul that puts up this petition the record remains forever true, “He could not be hid.”



V

*The Warfare of the Spirit*

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WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE was born in 1882 at Richmond, Va. He graduated from Harvard University with the degrees of B.A. and M.A. He received the B.D. degree from the Theological Seminary at Alexandria, Va. The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Richmond College.

He has been rector of Emmanuel Church, Greenwood, Va., St. Paul's Church, Richmond, Va., and is at present rector of Grace Church, New York City.

He served as chaplain of Base Hospital 45 during the World War. He is a member of the Commission on World Conference on Faith and Order. He is a trustee of Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and of Vassar College.

He was exchange preacher in England a few summers ago, preaching in the large cathedrals of that country. He is a popular university preacher.

He is the author of many books, some of the most recent being *Some Open Ways to God*, *The Inescapable Christ*, *The Master*, and *On Being Alive*.

Dr. Bowie is one of the most constructive thinkers in the Church to-day.



## V

### THE WARFARE OF THE SPIRIT

WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.*

2 CORINTHIANS 10: 3, 4.

THERE is something in our human nature which always vibrates at the sound of those words "our warfare." Through the long process of their career, men have been made instinctively combative. Without this instinct of combat, many of the achievements of the human race would have been impossible, and only with it can much that is best in human life be maintained. But the crucial question is as to the field upon which this combativeness is to be expressed.

## I

First and most obviously, there has been the field of struggle, which is physical. As far back as we can trace history, men have periodically been engaged in war. To-day as never before we perceive the evils in war. The idealism of the race is girding itself to put an end to this thing which is now being recognized as a deadly menace to all civilization. But before we can do that, and indeed in order that we may do it, it is necessary for us first to perceive clearly those elements in war which give it so

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strong a hold upon men's imagination. War is evil; but its persistence is partly due to the fact that it is not all evil. It rallies to itself some of those qualities in human nature which are noblest, and it is essential that we should see what these are. For the real need of our world is not sufficiently expressed in the phrase "getting rid of war." We want not to destroy but to transfigure those qualities which make a man always potentially a warrior. Our critical task is to stop fighting on these bloody battlefields where our enemies are other men and learn to fight instead on those moral and spiritual battlefields where our antagonists are those evils which are the enemies of all men.

We begin, however, with the kind of warfare which we have most familiarly known. Let us recognize there those appeals to the instinct of a fighter which human nature can never do without.

War, in the first place, presents itself as a great adventure. Quite as much in our modern times, as in earlier ones, will that appeal be strong. In some respects, even, it is stronger, for most of our present life seems drably to lack adventure. We are not pioneers any more, as our forefathers often were. We are not grappling with the problems of the frontier, not face to face with the dangers of the wilderness, not matched with physical obstacles and odds which call out all our courageous hardihood. Instead of that, millions of men go every day about routine tasks to which they seem to be herded by their life's necessities as passively as so many sheep. No wonder that when war comes something long repressed in their

spirits may leap with a kind of fierce relief to answer it! The man who was a bricklayer, the clerk who spent his days at some dreary desk, the shopkeeper behind his counter, with nobody considering their lives as having any particular interest, suddenly find themselves clothed in a uniform while all the world regards them. They march down the avenue behind the streaming flags and quickening music, while tens of thousands shout in the exultancy of a mass emotion. For the first time in their lives, they are somebody. For the first time they move in the public eye and are a part of the main stream of their country's enthusiasm and energy. They do not know yet what war will be like; but they know that it is exciting. They have been taken out of their little corners and their little tasks and made a part of something great.

As war enlists the adventurous in men, so also it may arouse the heroic. The man who goes to battle sooner or later has to learn to conquer the timidity of his own flesh. He has got to learn to forget his comfort, his safety, his life itself in this desperate business to which he will be committed. He will see a great deal of beastliness; but even in the worst of it he will conceive a new respect for those qualities in human nature of himself and of others which can make men go on day by day enduring the mud and cold and nastiness of the trenches, submitting to discipline and obeying orders, climbing out of shelter and going straight into gunfire and the likelihood of death—in short, forcing his body every day to endure and to dare in a way which makes him know that even his own ordinary self is making a decent go at courage. And now and then he

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will see some man not unlike himself rise to some superb act of reckless valor which is unmistakably heroic. He watches that, and he feels a kind of reflected pride in his own manhood that this was possible. At the last meeting of the Church Congress, one of the speakers would have been welcomed with polite attention had he been introduced as the Bishop of Southern Ohio; but the eyes of all people in the crowded room looked up with new attention when that young and striking figure, speaking now on the affirmative side of the question, "Does Christ Teach Pacifism?" was introduced as formerly a Major of the Three Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Infantry and was a wearer of the Distinguished Service Cross "for extraordinary heroism in action." Something in us always thrills to recognize the man who, when put to the test, has proven that he will not be afraid, and, danger or no danger, will carry out unflinchingly what he sets out to do. And if we seek a noble expression of the heroic quality which has been evident in war we may turn to these sentences from a recent biography of that most romantic cavalry leader of the nineteenth century, Major-General J. E. B. Stuart, who at the age of thirty-one received his mortal wound as he rode at the head of his charging squadrons. "All his life was fortunate. It was given to him to toil greatly, and to enjoy greatly, and to taste no little fame from the works of his hands, and to drink the best of the cup of living. . . . He took his death wound in the front of battle, as he wanted it, and he was granted some brief hours to press the hands of men who loved him, and to arrange him-

self in order, to report before the God of Battles, Whom he served."

Furthermore, war appeals to men because it simplifies the issue. We bargain and hesitate, and seldom fling ourselves with superb hazard into some difficult and costly enterprise. But war reveals how men can rise to this more unreckoning devotion. This is the reason why so many men were happy in the war and were actually at a loss when it was over and they had to come back to the more complicated conditions of peace. Their choices were unified. There was a neck-or-nothing spirit about war which became a man's strength after he had accepted it. It was difficult at first to accustom himself to war conditions; but once he had adopted discomfort and danger as a matter of course, and once he was accustomed to no other expectation than that of taking hold of the hard thing and carrying it through, he began to feel this drastic commitment putting iron into his blood.

Also, at its highest war may realize—even though within its own arbitrary limits—the forgetfulness of self in a glorious devotion to a larger cause. One may go and look at the statue of Nathan Hale in the City Hall Park, New York, and read upon its pedestal those words which voice that spirit of devotion at its highest. Standing with his hands tied behind him, and facing his own lonely and ignominious death as a spy, Nathan Hale said: "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country." In every war men have willingly given their lives for their country and for their comrades. They have gone upon forlorn ventures like that expedition made up of volun-

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teers from the British navy, all of them enlisted upon the explicit declaration that few or none of them could be expected to come back, who set sail upon the ships which they were deliberately to sink and block the mouth of the German submarine base at Zeebrugge. They have marched out like the immortal brigade of Pickett at Gettysburg to storm the heights of Cemetery Ridge; and they have ridden, like the six hundred at Balaklava, "into the mouth of hell." They have gone out, as many a man did in the World War, into no man's land to bring in a wounded comrade; or, being in command, they have led a group of men through the zone of fire into their own lines, and have said simply, as one sergeant mortally wounded in France in 1918 said to me, "I was certainly proud that none of the other boys got hurt." Self-forgetfulness like that has been the white flower which blossoms out of the red horror of war.

For war is fundamentally horrible. It may enlist and utilize for its own ends the noblest qualities of men; but its own essential quality is devilish. It begins as the great adventure, but before long that adventure turns into a treadmill where the iron hoofs of stupid cruelty go trampling out the lives of men. It seems to call for heroes, and often the morally heroic in men makes answer; but what it really calls for is hatred and ferocity and all the brutal instincts which human nature supposedly has tamed. It gives men the terrible power of concentration on a single issue, but this issue on which they concentrate is death. It adorns itself with the beauty of men's unselfishness, but it wears this like a plume upon a helmet

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which surmounts a grinning skull. The chivalry of human nature is not a consistent part of war. It is the noble inconsistency which men carry with them in spite of war. It is not the business of war to make men generous or merciful. It is war's business to make them merciless. From the standpoint of war, the only ideal soldier is the ideally effective killer. He is the decent man bred back into the savage until he is ready—as a bayonet instructor whom a friend of mine once encountered in the World War said he wanted every man he taught to be ready—"if he met his own mother wearing a German helmet to run his bayonet through her breast." War inhibits the best and unleashes the worst. It organizes its deliberate propaganda of lies. It manufactures the mass hatred which will enable whole nations to permit such organized cruelties as to the normal spirit would be impossible. It regiments humanity into an orgy of insane destruction from which neither armies nor whole populations can get free, until at last they lie like wounded animals too weak from loss of blood to lunge any longer at each other's throats. Then when the war is over, and the maddened passions cool, and the higher spirit of mankind begins to recover its clear consciousness, it understands how all the lofty motives to which war speciously appealed have been dragged down and made slaves of evil.

## II

But it is not only in war that the combative elements in humanity can be called into expression. They may be enlisted in the activities of modern business; and here

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again we need to disentangle impulses which are essentially noble from the ignoble ends to which they may be put.

For multitudes of men business is the great adventure. War may be a more exciting interlude; but wars are occasional, and business is constant. It is upon the struggles and successes of business that much of the attention of our time is concentrated. The man who achieves is rewarded by the open admiration or by the scarcely less flattering envy of the multitude. To win a great place in the business world is to have become a person of power, and the pursuit of power is the quest to which the modern spirit thrills. A boy comes out of college, or enters the commercial world through some other door. To his thought it is like an arena in which the strongest and most resolute will survive. He has no ill will toward his competitor, but neither will he have much imagination concerning him. His mind is on the struggle and the prizes of it. He has entered upon a bold hazard, and his blood stirs with the instinct to keep the sword of his own powers sharp, and to fight his way ahead.

Sometimes also this whole world of practical affairs—of business, or commerce, or industrial development—calls for qualities which are heroic. Here is some huge natural obstacle to be overcome. Here are difficulties of organization which seem insuperable. Here are stubborn problems which have defied the best knowledge and skill hitherto available. The ordinary man will accept these impediments as being impossibilities. But the rare man will not. He has the kind of courage which is roused by difficulty.



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He has the self-discipline of body, mind, and spirit which can enable him to bring to a problem a concentrated energy which to most people would be unthinkable. When he does great things, people will explain them by saying that he has the brain of a genius, but a more primal reason is that he has the heart of a fighter. He has been capable of that extra thrust of courage which gives to a man's energies the irresistible impact of the heroic. By men of that spirit the transcontinental railroads have been built, the tunnels have been driven under the Hudson River, the fleets of modern *aéroplanes* have been developed from the lonely and derided experiments of the pioneers. Unnumbered things which the world laughed at have been carried forward to success, and young men entering the business world know this. They realize that there are advances still to be achieved by those who will dare to push out beyond the crowd, and the fact that this is so challenges in their natures all that is intrepid.

Business also may give to a man's energies that same sort of concentration which war can give, for business often does assume a strenuousness and a drastic authority comparable to war. A man must be willing to sacrifice or postpone his secondary interests. "Nothing but business" was a sign which at one time used to be placed in certain executive offices; and though it is usually regarded now as a better policy to remove those curtly printed words, it remains true that many business men carry upon their faces a no less unmistakable sign of "nothing but business." They are impatient of anything which seems to them irrelevant. They have no time for small amenities.

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In any conversation they must drive straight to what they think is the practical point, deal with it sharply, and pass on. Their lives may be losing many of the gentler satisfactions to which they might be sensitive; but they do not know that yet. They are feeling the powerful impulsion of one strong central urge, and in the simplification of their interests there is undoubted power.

At its best, the business world may give scope for men to forget themselves in a larger loyalty. Men are seldom pressing their advantage exclusively as individuals. Almost always they belong to some group or union, or corporate organization, in which their own interests are merged with the interests of others. Sometimes a man so identifies himself with the welfare of the larger group that his own particular fortunes seem insignificant in comparison. Many men to-day are bearing their heaviest load of anxiety, not on account of themselves, but on account of others who are dependent upon their leadership. They know that, if the business for which they are responsible fails, although they themselves might be able to live on their savings, hundreds of people whom they have employed will be faced with immediate economic peril and a future full of fear. It would be a golden book that would be written if any one could gather and inscribe the names of those men, responsible as executives and directors for business organizations to-day, who knowingly have seen profits diminish and deliberately have accepted great risks in order to keep the business going, though to their own disadvantage, in order that their employees might not be turned adrift. Where such things have been

true, business itself has been true to the finest instincts of the human heart.

But when all this has been said, we know that there is another side of the picture. Business does enlist much that is most virile and admirable in our contemporary generation; but it enlists these for ends which, though not crudely destructive like those of war, are yet chaotic and distracted. Business as we have known it in our modern world has too often been a confused *mêlée* of forces which have never learned to be creative, an unlighted battlefield "where ignorant armies clash by night."

A few years ago in America any criticism of the spirit and method of our business would have been received with impatience, or rather it would have been laughed aside by men who went upon their way exultant with the heady wine of their seemingly invincible success. But now there is a different mood. Something has happened to the business world in which the rich prizes of success once seemed so sure. We know that much of what we did achieve was snatched haphazard. The gravest charge against modern business, which is now facing its inescapable indictment, is this: that the business world has never stopped to frame any intelligent philosophy of its own purpose. It has followed opportunism and shortsighted expediency. It has crudely assumed that if everyone went on instinctively struggling for his own advantage, by some benevolent miracle the welfare of all would be advanced. Was it not true that the chief energies of the strongest men were enlisted in business enterprise? Was it not true that the lure of the business world was summoning each year the most ambi-

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tious and aggressive spirits of youth? How was it possible that business, which captured so much that was admirable, could be other than admirable itself? But we are forced to recognize that in its wide aspects it has not been admirable. It has gone blundering along, the blind leading the blind, until the whole company is in imminent danger of falling into the ditch.

"If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness," said Jesus in one of those immortal sayings which pursue us until at last we recognize what they mean. The light by which modern business has too frequently guided itself seemed clear enough to mental shrewdness; but there was a moral darkness in it which was bound sooner or later to bring on an eclipse. That light was self-interest. This self-interest, it was supposed, could illuminate the whole field of practical affairs. There were inconsistencies in this belief, as we have already seen, just as there were inconsistencies in war. In many instances men have brought a magnificent unselfishness into business; but, in general, it has been self-interest upon which business has depended to fight its way ahead. If any one doubts this, let him reflect upon the kind of talk which frequently is heard in Congress when any such matters as international trade and tariffs are discussed. There is little conception then of a solidarity of interests among all nations; instead there is crass and unashamed scheming as to how our own nations may get rich and stay rich, no matter at what cost to other peoples, and as to the measure of armament which will need to be maintained to keep us safe in a world of universal selfishness. Or let him

who is still uncertain consider the difficulty which men of good will in any industrial conflict always find if they try to frame agreements which will cure industrial excesses and injustices. Nearly always there will be an intractable group who will refuse to enter into any agreement if by remaining independent they can gain some unscrupulous advantage. And the strength of their position lies in the fact that, when they are doing what they individually think is profitable, they are doing what the prevailing business morality gives them in the last resort the right to do. What informed man is there who will not in this time acknowledge that our modern world of business, notwithstanding the spiritual capacities inherent in many of the men who adorn it, is yet in itself unspiritualized? In the everyday realm of what we call our practical affairs, it is a hard thing for a man to carry his religion into all he does. He knows that the motives and sanctions of the work he begins on Monday are not always consistent with the ideals he has recognized on Sunday. The finer the man is, the more troubled he may be by this division which cuts across his personality. He loves adventure. He honors courage. He feels the dignity of doing something with disciplined thoroughness. And he wants to be loyal to something infinitely larger than his own self. He wants to be a servant of the Kingdom of God. Yet he knows at the same time that this acquisitive society which we have created will not let him. He can carry his shrewdest abilities into his business; but he knows that he cannot carry into it always that part of his own soul which he knows is his best. And if that is true

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of the man who is an immediate part of our money-making and our value-producing system, it is true also of all the rest of us who are its beneficiaries. For something is wrong in this twisted world which we have created. Our finest aptitudes are harnessed to unworthy ends. The vigor and courage of human spirits are monopolized by the sort of struggle which is not sufficiently worth the winning. The fighting spirit of our human nature is penned into an arena which is not worthy of the greatness of its soul.

### III

Where then ought our real warfare to be? It ought to be on the battle ground of a moral and spiritual struggle against enemies which are evil in themselves and which corrupt life wherever they can touch it. We have a higher task than that of killing men in physical war. We have a higher task than that of overthrowing competitors and capturing material rewards in mercenary matters. Our business is to release that idealism which is partly expressed in military or in industrial struggle and consecrate this to the warfare of the spirit.

I know that when we begin to talk thus we shall seem to some to be moving into a realm of shadows. People understand well enough the fascination of physical war. They understand also the fascination of our everyday material competition. They know what it means to see advantage and courage and determination let loose in these. It is not so easy to imagine or to dramatize a warfare in the realm of principles, but that is what the Church

must help us do. It must furnish the great company of men and women who with illumined imagination will see the meaning of the moral and spiritual warfares which are challenging our time, will recognize those who wear the uniform of this warfare, will honor all quiet heroism when they see it, and by their recognition will encourage and fortify every soul which is setting its face toward the crucial battle upon which the destiny of life depends. For, as that great battler of the spirit, the Apostle Paul, has written: "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

And now, finally and particularly, what are the strongholds which we must assail in this spiritual war which alone can completely enlist and completely glorify the adventurousness, the valor, and the devotion of mankind?

There are three. There is the stronghold of indifference, whose banner is "Don't Care." There is the stronghold of ignorance, whose banner is "Don't Know." And there is the stronghold of cowardice, whose banner is "Don't Dare." These three citadels in the midst of human life dominate much of what ought to be the beautiful, free country of our energies, and they must be assailed and overthrown if we are to know the full possibilities of the human spirit.

As long as the stronghold of indifference stands unconquered, our idealism, both public and private, is paralyzed. We have imagined as a nation that we could shut ourselves up within the walls of our unconcern for

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the fates of the rest of the earth. We were rich, we thought; we were separate, and we were self-sufficient. Why should we trouble ourselves with plans either economic or political for the advancement of the general human welfare when our own particular welfare was already so highly satisfactory? And in our private matters we have been prone to ask the same question. Men who were busy making money in their own business were not urgently concerned with far-reaching social results. They did not have the interest, and they told themselves that they did not have the time, to deal with such questions as child labor or the human consequences of working conditions in mines and steel mills and cotton factories; or the whole complicated matter of a just distribution of profits and the prevention of grossly excessive plunder, which ultimately had to be paid for by the man with the little wage; or the ominous unrest of millions of workers with insecurity of employment and their increasing dependence upon the property-owning class. Many of us as Christians have vaguely felt that the whole realm of our practical energies was in danger of being dominated by motives which had little to do either with justice or with mercy. The time has come when we have got to be concerned with that. We cannot let the castle of cynical indifference, with which the whole spirit of materialism has confronted religion, go unchallenged. We dare not let it appear that politics and business are independent of religion. Whenever there rises the stronghold of the arrogant indifference which defies the right of high spirituality to pervade the whole of life, that stronghold must



be destroyed. It is to such a crusade that the best in us as Christian men and women is summoned now.

In the same fashion we must deal with the stronghold of ignorance, whose flag is "Don't Know." There are many people who would care about evils in our present civilization if they knew. There are many others who do know that the evils exist but excuse themselves by saying that they do not know how to move against them. It is quite true that our problems in this time are exceedingly complex and baffling. Many of our ablest executives, both political and economic, are confessedly bewildered. But there is a difference between being ignorant and being inertly willing to stay ignorant. To-day, as seldom before, there is urgency in that command of Jesus, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind." As Christian individuals, as men in conversation with other men, as members of the Church and responsible ultimately for its corporate mind, it is our business now to try to think more clearly than we have ever done before as to what the application of Christian standards to our practical life will mean and will require. To do that, will be no easy matter. It will be an adventure of the intellect, less dramatic but infinitely more important than physical war. It will require great heroism and unselfishness. For the men who do that pioneer thinking, it will mean collision with old prejudices. It may mean the misunderstanding and irritation of their friends. Men do not like to be compelled to think, especially when that thinking may prove costly to their interests. But, either voluntarily or by the draft, the army of thinkers has got to be recruited

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now if our civilization would be saved. We must storm the gates of the castle of ignorance and tear down the flag which proclaims its humiliating dominion of "Don't Know."

Finally, there is the stronghold of cowardice, whose banner is "Don't Dare." One pathetic feature of our time is the collapse of confidence. A few years ago there was nothing which our practical men thought they could not do. Now they are wondering whether anything can be done. They are overawed by fears with which they cannot seem to grapple. Like Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress*, they are in imminent danger of being flung into the dungeon of the castle of "Giant Despair." But here supremely the trumpet note of religion must be heard. The resiliency of our human spirit is not broken. The magnificent assets of our human energies are not less great than they ever were. In the souls of men which so often have risen to their physical crises, there is enough of the spirit of adventure, enough heroism, and enough devotion to face our intellectual and moral problems and to destroy the doubts which paralyze us now. Against the castle of cowardice there needs to be a rallying of all those who will not endure to be told they do not dare.

So, not to no war, but to greater war, are we called to-day—away from the old wars of violence and greed, away from wars against men, to a war against the spiritual enemies of man. To that war all that is valiant in the human soul is summoned, that it may be mighty through God to the pulling down of whatever strongholds have hindered the freedom of our fullest life.

VI

*A Stubborn Faith*

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IVAN LEE HOLT

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IVAN LEE HOLT was born in 1886 at DeWitt, Ark. He graduated from Vanderbilt University with the degree of A.B. He received the Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Chicago. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him. He has traveled and studied in Europe.

He was ordained in the Methodist ministry. He has been pastor of University Church, St. Louis, and Centenary Church, Cape Girardeau. He was professor of Old Testament Literature at Southern Methodist University. He is now pastor of St. John's Church in St. Louis.

He has been a lecturer at the University of Texas and the University of Missouri. He has been a member of the General Conference of the Southern Methodist Church, and also of the Ecumenical Methodist Conference. He was the representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the Union of Methodist Churches in England in 1932.

He is one of the most popular preachers in his denomination. He is in constant demand for commencement addresses.

## VI

### A STUBBORN FAITH

IVAN LEE HOLT

*But if not, be it known unto thee, O king,  
that we will not serve thy gods.*

DANIEL 3: 18.

ANY faith which survives these days of pessimism and cynicism must be a reasonable faith. In contrasting faith and knowledge a man once said, "Faith is believing what you know is not so." We have had too much faith of that sort. I know people who say with reference to some unusual statement in the Bible, "You must accept it as a statement of fact because it is in the Bible." So men have talked about Jonah and the whale; about Jehovah's sending a lying spirit into the mouths of certain prophets; about the earth's position at the center of the universe in the Genesis account of creation. The only defensible position about the Bible in these days is that it is a progressive revelation of God; that it has its human touch; that it must be interpreted under the leadership of the Spirit of Truth.

In my time there have been at least three readjustments in religious interpretation and thought. They have come about through the theory of evolution, the historical approach to the Bible, and the emphasis on social values and programs. Perhaps now we are being forced by a fourth, the philosophy of humanism, to a new interpreta-

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tion of God, or a restatement of our theistic belief. Whatever the changes, faith must be reasonable, not contrary to reason. It may go far beyond reason on the same road reason travels. Protestantism is reason grown courageous enough to trust and serve. It is not a new form of the scribe's literal knowledge of a book. It is not the rejection of sublimity and imaginative splendor in public worship. It is rather a religion that affirms a historical foundation, and then a spiritual principle. The historical foundation is that the Eternal has given us an actual revelation of his will in Jesus Christ, and the spiritual principle is that the service of the Eternal, after the manner of Christ, is direct, immediate, personal. A person, not a rite nor an institution, is the first principle of Protestant faith. The infinite spirit, the filial soul, the Christ as living grace and witness of the union of the two—such is our faith. In defending that thesis I think of myself as standing in the midst of a great universe. I could tighten my belt, throw out my chest, and whistle to keep up my courage as I walk out into a universe without God. But that is not my attitude. I reverently ask "What?" and "Why?" as I look about me, and seek answers to my questions.

The universe seems to me creative; it is not a dead mass, even though there may be dead worlds in it; it is a living, vibrant thing, and in successive ages new forms of life are ever emerging. The universe seems to me rational. I know there are frightful disasters, and glaring evils, and unjust sufferings, but it is easier to explain evil in a rational universe than to explain good in an irrational uni-

verse. Even if the universe were a machine, no machine is set up without a mind; mechanism with all its dogmatism is in the discard. There seems to be reality that can be measured and weighed; there seems to be reality that can be sensed. By either approach or both one discovers order, development, growth. Then the universe seems to me productive of values. I cannot think of a fortuitous combination of atoms producing such values as goodness, beauty, and truth. Then finally the universe seems to me friendly to personality; the terms "personality" and "personal" may be only symbols, capable of differing interpretations; but so are mechanism and equation. Those qualities in my friend which make him the person he is are the qualities I find in the universe. God is to me everything I mean by a creative, rational, value-producing, friendly-to-personality universe—and more. I speak of him as personal because personality is the highest symbol I know.

His personality I find expressing itself in Jesus Christ—in other men also, but most perfectly in Jesus. When I am asked what God is like I turn to Jesus. The spirit and mind of Jesus are the finest and most vitalizing influence the world has known. They must not be too much confused with creedal statements, or organization, or imperfect institutions which have sought to give them form. As we think of them religion seems to be "the first beautiful companion man meets in his wilderness. It is the pathway between life and death worn deepest by the feet of the perpetually seeking generations. It is by man's side when he walks the high and lonely places where he

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makes the discovery of himself. In life it is with him, illuminating him at his noblest, scourging him at his basest. Neither in death does it leave him; but when all other voices moan of irreparable defeat, it alone lifts the cry of defiance and stands on the ruins of mortality announcing mysterious and splendid victory for the fallen." Faith must be reasonable!

Faith must also be adventurous. One of the great sayings of our day is that utterance of a British soldier in the Great War, "Faith is betting one's life that there is a God." Carlyle used to say that every man must face one question. Other questions he might avoid, but this one he must answer: "Will you be a hero or a coward." The brave man is the man of faith who looks out into the future unafraid. Said Jesus, as he faced death, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." William James used to tell a story of a fisherman on New England's coast. The philosopher was talking to the fisherman one day about the life beyond, and saying: "You are growing old. How does the future look to you?" Quickly came the answer, "My gray gull lifts its wings against the nightfall and takes the dim leagues with fearless eye."

A man must choose which way he will go—the way with God, or the way without God. What puts agnosticism out of count is that life is a forced option; a man cannot postpone; he must choose and that each day. Faith is not demonstrated knowledge; it is adventure, but it is glorious adventure. You have probably seen those maps of the Middle Ages on which the geographer put down all the continents and lands he knew. Over the great un-



known and undiscovered regions of the world he wrote, "Horrors and monsters." A Christian adventurer took these maps and over the same regions wrote "God." The Bible of that fearless adventurer, Sir John Franklin, had the words of the Psalmist underscored, "Though I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, behold, thou art there." His life was lost in the Arctic waters, but on his lips must have been that confession as he died. Faith must be adventurous!

But faith must be not only reasonable and adventurous. It must be stubborn if it fail not in these days. Where is God in a time of great disaster? Where is God when war rages? Where is God when personal sorrows multiply? As I raise these questions I think of the Hebrew children before the great king in Babylon. They would not worship the image the king had set up and were to be cast into a burning, fiery furnace. The king gave them a chance to repent and change their resolution, asking, "Who will deliver you out of my hands?" Quickly came the answer of faith: "Our God will deliver us. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods." Listen to these words, "*But if not.*" They are the words of stubborn faith. God might not deliver them; he might let them burn to a crisp in the furnace; but they would still cling to their faith in him.

In a time of national disaster the faith of Habakkuk, the prophet, is tested. A horde of barbarians sweeps down on his land from the north; towns are destroyed; innocent women and children are slain. Where is God? As the prophet questions the moral government of the universe

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he stands on a lofty height to be near God. "Why, O God?" is the cry wrung from his soul. The answer which comes back to him is, "The righteous shall live by his steadfastness." If questions come that one cannot answer and experiences that he cannot understand, there is nothing for him to do but hold on to his faith with grim determination. Even more striking is the experience of Job. He and his friends know a God who always blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked even in this life. Job comes to suffering in which he can find no help in the God he knows. Then with superb daring of soul he appeals from the only God he knows to One who must exist: "Beyond and above the God I know is another. I know that my Redeemer lives."

One meets in these modern days some experiences of stubborn faith. In a Catholic hospital I used to visit a devout Catholic who had lain in her bed paralyzed for ten years. I used to stop at her door to catch the smile on her face.

A great doctor in my city was stricken with an incurable malady. A few days before his death his twelve-year-old boy was in his room. "Does it hurt much, dad?" "Yes, son, I am afraid it does." "Well, you should worry, dad. It is a far better place than this to which you are going, and there is no pain there."

A woman served as visitor and assistant at my church. Every day for ten years that I was in the city I saw her in staff conferences. One day she went to the hospital for an examination, and received her death sentence: "You have only eighteen months at most to live," said the doctor.

## IVAN LEE HOLT

She did not tell me; she told none of her friends. Through the next twelve months all commented on her friendliness and happiness of manner. There was no bravado, but there was no wavering. She lived as though years were before her. A few weeks before her death she went on a last visit to her sister. As she was returning home on the train it became evident that she would not live to reach home. To her daughter, who was with her, she said: "Take a pencil and write down messages for each member of the family, and tell my minister that I want no sad music at my funeral. I would like for the choir to sing 'Fling Wide the Gates.'" When the funeral was over I said to a brother minister, as I told him the story: "I could not do it. Can we preach such a faith when we cannot show such courage?" He answered, "We must continue to preach it if we know anyone who has such faith."

I do not know what tragedies are yours. Perhaps financial losses have come; perhaps a friend has grievously disappointed you; perhaps death and sorrow have come to your home. Are you crying out of the deeps unto God? Then remember the Hebrew children, remember Habakkuk, remember Job, remember anyone you know who has shown a stubborn faith. In his little book, *Religious Perplexities*, Principal Jacks says: "It is not the function of religion to answer all questions we raise in our perplexities. It is the function of religion to give a man courage to go in the face of life's perplexities." "Our God will deliver us; . . . but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods." *But if not, we will not.* Sometimes faith must be a stubborn faith!



VII

*Remember Jesus Christ*

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FREDERICK WILLIAM NORWOOD

MINISTER, CITY TEMPLE, LONDON, ENGLAND

FREDERICK WILLIAM NORWOOD was born in Australia. He was educated at Ormond College, Melbourne, from which institution he graduated. The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity has been conferred upon him by Oberlin College and Ursinus College in the United States.

He was ordained in the Congregational ministry. He has been the minister at Canterbury, Victoria; Brunswick, Victoria; North Adelaide, South Australia. He has been at the City Temple, London, since 1919.

During the war he was Honorary Captain, Australian Imperial Forces.

He was chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1930-31.

He is a frequent visitor to the United States and Canada. He is a most pleasing and instructive preacher. When you hear him, you always carry away strength for your yearning soul.

He is the author of *The Cross and the Garden*, *Sunshine and Wattlegold*, *Moods of the Soul*, *The Gospel of the Larger World*, *The Gospel of Distrust*, and *Indiscretions of a Preacher*.

## VII

### REMEMBER JESUS CHRIST

F. W. NORWOOD

*Remember Jesus Christ. . . .*

2 TIMOTHY 2: 8.

#### PRAYER

O God, we thank Thee for the historic tradition that brings us anew within the sweep of this Lenten Season. We immerse ourselves in the faith of the ages and return once more to this period made sacred to us by the Passion of our Lord. We pray Thee to give us grace to enter into it, drawn not only by the historic impulse, but by Thine own Spirit for our enlightening and for the enrichment of our souls. Help us to understand anew how everlasting is the conflict between light and darkness, between good and evil, between the things that surged to their greatest height in opposition to Christ and the things that were shown by Him in their greatest glory. Help every one of us in the measure in which we find ourselves involved in this conflict to put our trust in the eternal righteousness as He did and not fear to climb or even to go down into the dark. Teach us also in the measure in which we are involved in the conflict that we may find our way upward and onward toward the holy will of God, as He did, and may the same great Eternal Spirit that was His strength, and was shadowed forth by Him, be ours also in the measure in which we can receive it. When we look out upon the great world in all the troubles and perplexities of these tempestuous days, then help us also to hold fast by the eternal righteousness and to trust in Thy hidden purposes. As

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intimate things require the secrecy of the womb so that the burden of fruitfulness may be shielded until the hour dawns, help us to believe that Thou hast great and wonderful purposes for the children of men which are ripening toward the birth. Help us, we beseech Thee, at this time that we may discover the grace of God anew. Thou art forever taking us by surprise. Thou dost reveal Thy strength in our times of weakness and Thy beauty in times of darkness. Help us to find, even within ourselves, in the innermost sanctuary of that temple of our bodies, where the grace of God abides, deep resources, and to know that even there, by the grace of God, is the answer to our need and the equipment for our tasks. If we have been turning our eyes hither and thither seeking for help in things external, then help us, we beseech Thee, to find the help that we need within, where by the touch of divine grace conscious weakness is changed into joyous strength.

Grant, we beseech Thee, that some who have come to this place in weakness may depart clothed with strength; that some who have come in sorrow may find their sorrow made radiant by the eternal message of the Cross; that some who have come with no sense of the presence and the power of God may discover that in Him they have all and abound.

So help us to worship Thee, that our human worship may make contact with the divine grace and be overflowed by it; that our frail prayers, limping uphill in their weakness, may meet the winged hosts of heaven and swell their anthem of praise.

Since we have come in the name of Christ into the house of prayer, let the wondrous grace of God meet us and enswathe us and put upon us the impress of its own beauty. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



I HAD first thought of preaching only upon these three words which seemed to be underlined and emphasized as the passage that met the eye. But I never was able to get away from the associations of the passage as a whole. "Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead." There is an association between Memory and the Resurrection of the Dead. It is more than merely suggestive.

I

To remember is to experience a resurrection. Things that seem to have died, that have ceased breathing, that make no response to the present moment are suddenly awakened by memory and made alive again. It is a kind of resurrection.

A man's personality resembles a mausoleum. Behind the placid front of his breast, beneath the calm acquiescence of his composed face, shut away from view, there are buried all manner of things which once were active and responsive to the movements of the hour; but they seemed to have died, some not long since, some long, long ago.

But one never knows when Remembrance will come like an angel of the resurrection with a trumpet in his hand, a spiritual trumpet whose notes are like the notes that travel through the waves of ether and are only heard in rooms where listeners are gathered in silence within, and at the sound of the trumpet the graves are opened and the dead come forth. Remembrance is the Awakener, the Lord of the resurrection.

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### II

We may still hold on to the figure of the resurrection, for things remembered and brought to life again do not die, but live on and go forward into the life of the future.

Nothing really lives but memories. Things that we call new have no significance until they relate themselves with things that we remember. Our racial memories are much more eternal and definitive than the new things we say are always breaking in upon us in this strange era in which we live. However mankind may make progress into an unknown future, passing from the material plane onward into the spiritual realm, the infantry, so to speak, of the great army will be composed of things remembered. New experiences will be added like "arms" or "wings," as we say when we use our military metaphors, to describe new adaptations to meet new conditions, but the rank and file of all our operations will consist of things we have experienced and forever remember.

We shall always be men, fashioned in the main long, long ago. Even when we go forward into the spiritual realm toward which we are journeying we shall be "human" spirits. We shall take with us our memories of the earth plane, and remembrance will lead us up and along as we climb the spirals of the Life Beyond.

It is a mistake to think that the past is past. The past that is remembered is alive and alive forever.

### III

We may still keep the imagery of the resurrection as

we reflect that remembrance is the symbol of judgment. What a man remembers is the touchstone of his character. Not what he hears! We hear all sorts of things. Sensations break in upon us like the waves of the sea, but we only retain those that belong to us; the rest pass us by. If one has a faculty for music, he remembers music. If one has it not, he hears it, but it does not remain; it does not belong to him. How an artist remembers pictures—how a financier remembers prices—how a housewife remembers details in house management. Things that belong to you, things that you are, remain. Things that do not belong to you do not stay; they pass away.

When something has happened in our lives which has had a tremendous effect upon our characters, how the mind goes round and round, viewing it from every angle, imprinting upon itself every detail until it lives and lives forever. I suppose we never really forget things that belong to us. We bury some of them, and have no time to stay by the graves. Our graveyards are like some of those you find in the heart of old London, whose high buildings overshadow, and traffic roars and rushes by. But one clear note on the trumpet of the angel of remembrance, and the ghosts walk through the city, while flesh and blood become shadows.

What a man remembers easily, deeply, tenaciously, that is what a man is, and every now and again remembrance calls that man to judgment.

#### IV

We may still keep the figure of the resurrection as we

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reflect that both good and evil are in remembrance. They come alike from out their graves.

There are memories that cramp; there are memories that release.

We all know what it is to be cramped by memory. It is no use telling us to forget; we cannot. I have no faith in that kind of forgetfulness which consists in determinedly driving away unwelcome memories. They are like marauding things which come out of the woods which you may drive back into the undergrowth, but you cannot locate them, and you never know when they will come out again.

Evil memories have to be transformed, and one essential condition for their transformation is that they should be more definitely remembered, looked at in the face, stared down, understood, conquered.

It is much easier to compose the conduct than it is to erase memories. We all know what it is sometimes to decide upon a correct kind of conduct toward, let us say, a certain person, though our minds remain full of bitter memories. How hollow that is! We ourselves know that it is camouflage, and it is almost certain that he does also. We truly affect each other not so much by the touch of our hand or the sound of our voice as by a subtle aura that comes out invisibly from our personality of which we and others are conscious.

Few things are more fantastically futile than the effort to do the right thing while we are thinking the wrong thing. There are memories that cling about us which,

not being cleansed or conquered, we think to screen by correctness of conduct, but they give a theatrical appearance to our studied actions.

There is a kind of patience that never complains, but would probably be better if the complaints passed over the lips and oxygenated themselves in harmless "grousing," but they are allowed to bite in like acid into the fabric of the soul.

There is a secret kind of sin which paints pictures in the gallery of memory more compelling and more definitive in many cases than if that sin were done quite openly and blown away upon the cleansing winds of heaven. There are evil memories that cannot be shouted down to death and cannot be driven into the dark. They can only be recognized and wrestled with and conquered and, most gloriously of all, transformed by the grace of God until the bitterness is taken out of them.

V

Let us now come out of these dark woodland paths, fascinating as they are, out into the sunlight, and remember that there are memories which release. And now you see I have come to my text. I have been approaching it all the time, step by step, as we wandered along the winding paths in the wood; but there it is, out in the open air, sun-kissed, blown upon by the free winds of heaven. "Remember Jesus Christ."

Everybody knows, if he thinks about it at all, that a follower of Jesus is one who often remembers him. There is a kind of spiritual or psychological resurrection that

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may happen again and again in our hearts. There is not only the one great historic resurrection of the Easter time so long ago, but it is remembrance that brings Jesus out of the shadows of the past into the sunlight of the present. Jesus, for us, is dead when we never think of him; he is alive when we remember him. It is remembrance that distinguishes a disciple. A disciple who never remembers Jesus—well, he cannot be a disciple. The essence of discipleship is to remember often Him whose disciple you are.

How wonderful, how glorious, that there should be a point in all the ages and in the midst of experience to which remembrance may come with gladness and find release. "Remember Jesus Christ."

That is a kind of talisman that a man could carry through life with inestimable advantage. "Remember Jesus Christ."

Most of the great things in this world are so simple that we stumble over them. We spend hours and hours, we preachers especially, big sinners as the rest, hundreds and thousands of times we discuss problems of human conduct and try to give advice to men and women in all the phases of their experience; and yet, if one would only see it and accept it, here is a phrase so simple and so short that anyone might despise it, and yet merely to take it to heart and live with it would change men's lives out of all recognition. "Remember Jesus Christ."

When I say a thing like that I feel as if I am playing on some mysterious instrument with spiritual keys that strike responses in hearts that are unknown to me. It is

like an æolian harp through which the winds blow, playing all manner of music, sometimes sinking down into a dirge, sometimes rolling on like a mighty anthem. It is like that sometimes when you say a simple true thing—that is, if the power of God happens to be with you when you are saying it. I ask that it may be. “Remember Jesus Christ.”

When life is just about as dark as it can be, when you are fighting desperately to keep your feet, tempted to despise yourself because of your own frailty, feeling your need of courage, patience, strength, and, above all, purity—“Remember Jesus Christ.”

When you are tempted to think ill of your neighbor, cannot get into right relations with him or her, finding a little spurious mental superiority perhaps because he does not see the truth as clearly or as you do, has lower standards of conduct than you have, or will not even be saved in the way in which it seems right to you, “Remember Jesus Christ.”

When you feel as though you had lost God, and all is dark without and within, then think that even he went through an experience in which he said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” “Remember Jesus Christ.”

When the unknown comes sweeping around you like a dark sea, the unknown that blots out all the future, that hovers round the gate of death, that clouds the far distances, whether in the future of the human race on this terrestrial plane or in the far beyond, in the realm of the spirit, “Remember Jesus Christ.”

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When you are inclined to think that everything, both personal and social, is drifting into disaster, when the world seems all out of joint and the Church seems defunct and nothing could save either but a resurrection, then Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead.

And not only in your dark hours but in the brightest hours of all—for there are such hours; if there were not, we could not live, hours when the whole universe seems wonderful and beautiful, as indeed it truly is—when you seem to see humanity on its long weary march toward the city of God, and the sunlight shines on its distant towers, when you feel yourself matched with the hour and are longing for the fray—there are such hours—they come to us like the swallows come, they do not always come because of the labor of our intellect, they come like spring comes, they come like the sea breezes come, they come like the sunlight comes, suddenly dissipating the clouds. Let them come, they are prophetic authentications of the revelations not yet made fully clear; but let them come, rise up to meet them, and as you rise to meet them with your head uplifted and your very soul aflame, then, supremely then, “Remember Jesus Christ.”



VIII

*The Heavenly Vision*

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RUSSELL HENRY STAFFORD

MINISTER, OLD SOUTH CHURCH  
BOSTON, MASS.

RUSSELL HENRY STAFFORD was born in 1890 at Wauwatosa, Wis. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with the B.A. degree. He received the M.A. degree from New York University and the B.D. degree from Drew Theological Seminary. The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Chicago Theological Seminary and Doctor of Laws by Oglethorpe University.

He was ordained in the Congregational ministry, and was pastor of the Open Door Congregational Church, in Minneapolis, the First Church, Minneapolis, Pilgrim Congregational Church, St. Louis, and is now pastor of Old South Church, Boston.

He is a trustee of Drury College, Piedmont College, and Emerson College of Oratory.

He is one of the leading ministers of America, and his sermons always have a very wide appeal.

He is the author of *Finding God* and *Christian Humanism*.

## VIII

### THE HEAVENLY VISION

RUSSELL HENRY STAFFORD

*Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.*

ACTS 26: 19.

THE conversion of Paul is the most important event in Christian history after the resurrection of Jesus, not even excepting Pentecost. To all generations of Churchmen, the vision on the Damascus road must be of perpetual interest. For the Christian Church as a world movement owes its origin to that experience which transformed an enemy of the Cross into its first foreign missionary, the first competent organizer and executive of Christian affairs, and the first systematic theologian of the gospel.

There are three accounts of this conversion in the book of Acts, two of them from Paul's own lips. The most dramatic of the three is found in the Apostle's speech at Cæsarea before the Roman Governor, Festus, and his guests, Herod Agrippa II, King of Chalcis, and Agrippa's sister, his aunt by marriage, the widow of his predecessor on the throne, Queen Bernice.

The dramatic quality of this narrative derives from the position of Paul himself at the time, and its contrast with the brilliancy of the setting. Twenty-four years had passed since Paul was converted, and he was now an old

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man, every inch a good soldier of Christ Jesus, hardened by many well-fought campaigns, yet with some of the most signal achievements of his career still waiting him in the few remaining years of his life. He had been two years in prison. But, though it had perhaps weakened his body, prison had not broken his spirit nor confined his mind. Invoking his prerogative as a Roman citizen, he had but lately taken his appeal to Cæsar—that is, to the Supreme Court of the Empire—and was awaiting transfer to Rome for trial before that august tribunal.

Festus was a newcomer in these parts, a high imperial official. Agrippa and Bernice were princelings of the mongrel stock of Herod, Jewish enough to be in a sort of family touch with Hebrew life and thought, Greek enough to be vain of their not very important titles, Roman enough to move in the world's best society and to hold a place near the top. The three of them swept into the audience chamber, with a glittering train of lords and ladies in attendance, moved by a not ill-natured curiosity as to what this little old Jew heretic, Rome's prisoner rather against Rome's will, might have to say for himself. They expected no more of the hearing than that it would afford them an hour's added diversion in a day already crowded with lustrous social engagements.

Perhaps, after all, that is all they got out of it. Nevertheless, they fell manifestly under the spell of the man whom they had summoned to give an account of himself. From the first word he uttered, Paul was master of the situation, because what he had to say was interesting, and was said with courtliness and with no little elegance. I

should suppose that this brief speech deserves to rank among the major orations on record.

One is struck first by the courtesy of Paul's approach to his subject. He realized that these potentates were not his enemies, and he availed himself to the full of the opportunity to conciliate their favor still further by legitimate compliments. He might well have been sullen, after his years in prison, at having to tell his story over again, without any possible immediate effect on the outcome of his case, simply to make a Roman holiday. But by bearing himself as a gentleman should under such circumstances he both preserved his own dignity and succeeded in making a real impression, though doubtless it was a fleeting one, in behalf of the religious truth to which he had dedicated his life.

Again, one cannot but note the Apostle's modesty on this occasion. Modesty is not a trait which we ordinarily associate with Paul. In his letters to Christian Churches he had so often to assert his rights and rehearse his claims to consideration, in order to curb personal detractors who were also dangerous enemies to the cause, that we are sometimes tempted to think that he was given to bombast. But in Festus' audience chamber there was no need for him to be on the defensive in this way. So he carefully understates his case. "I was not disobedient," says he. What a toning down there is, in that negative expression, of the colossal fact of his creative obedience through the quarter-century in which he had made his three great missionary journeys, written his most adroit and masterful epistles, and already changed the way of the Nazarene

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over from a Jewish sect into a world religion! This is the language of a man who knows how to forget himself in his work, and wants no personal credit save such as may be of use for the work's own sake.

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," said Agrippa, when he had done. And I judge that at the moment Agrippa almost meant it. Festus' exclamation tells us even more about the impression Paul had made: "Thy much learning is turning thee mad!" The Governor was constrained to admire in his prisoner a man with clear and powerful intellect, well trained. But there was no course open to him, short of actual acceptance of the gospel, save to call this story a sign of madness—this story of a dead man who was alive again, and of a heavenly vision certifying that he was the Son of God Most High. I sometimes wish that we might have heard this story for the first time after we had reached maturity, so that we might appreciate how mad it sounds to the hard, worldly mind. For its very extravagance might stimulate our imaginations and grip our souls. Yet probably it is as well that we did not, for by hearing it in childhood we were perhaps kept from becoming as hard and worldly as we might otherwise have been. Obviously it must be either, as Festus supposed, a preposterous invention of a disordered mind, or the supreme and central episode in God's relations with mankind. If this be madness, however, it is a divine madness; for from it have come through the centuries the greatest benefits ever wrought for humanity's relief and upbuilding.

Now we come to consider the story itself of this mar-

velous conversion. We hear it rehearsed in polished periods by Paul before his royal auditors. We believe, or at least we say that we believe, in the gospel to which his vision won him over. Most of us, if we are quite honest, feel at least a little skeptical as to the genuineness of our belief. We wish it went deeper with us. We envy Paul because he had so firm a foundation for his faith. We say to ourselves that he was a great Christian, and stands in the forefront of the ages among constructive world-citizens, because he had this great experience. Nothing of the sort has ever come to us. If it had, we might be great Christians too.

The wistful tinge in our thought about Paul's story of what befell him on the road to Damascus is due, I am sure, to our conviction that, if the gospel were not true, it ought to be; that there is no other influence among men so potent for all things good and fair as this gospel in which Paul believed so tremendously; that, if ever our race is to be rescued from the forces within it which make for its dissolution, it can only be when Christians in general believe in the gospel as tremendously as Paul did. In other words, what the world needs is Christians who are Christians all the way through, so that they act upon their faith as the platform of their whole life, not only in personal rectitude, but in unrelenting sacrificial service to a better order that must be brought to pass in human affairs. The only inspiration for labor to that end which has ever been effective, on any considerable scale or over any protracted period, is the faith of which Paul stands as the foremost exponent after Jesus. To be specific,

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you and I would be better men and women, and the world would profit far more from our sojourn here, if only we could be great Christians. Not all great Christians are great men; but, if we were all great Christians, some great man might arise among us, and the rest of us would be glad to find our usefulness in helping him at his work.

So it may pay us to study Paul's conversion, to see what there is in it which may be suggestive for us, and whether it need be wholly without an analogue in our own experience.

First, then, let me call your attention to one reassuring point. Paul was not converted to a theology, but to a person. After he had become a follower of that person, he had to work out a new theology. That suits us very well. We are suspicious of creeds which pretend to finality. If to be a great Christian meant to swallow down any formal statement of faith without criticism, none of us could ever qualify. We belong to a critical era, and in that degree in which our minds are alive we insist upon the right and necessity of thinking things out for ourselves. Well, that is exactly what Paul did, after his conversion. What that conversion did was to win his loyalty to a man, in whom at first he but sensed obscurely the ultimate values of life and the final truth about the Universe, instead of perceiving them clearly and conceiving them logically. We may not take kindly to ready-made creeds, but we do believe in high personal loyalties. So we can follow Paul thus far with sympathy.

Now there comes a second reassuring point. We often say that if only we could see Jesus, meeting him as a man



among men, we could not help wanting to be his friends, and there might be some real hope of our becoming his utterly devoted followers. But Paul did not see Jesus. He saw a light, which blinded him for the time being. That light meant to him Jesus' own presence; but he never looked upon the lineaments of Mary's Son in the flesh. Yet he became a more fruitful disciple than any even of the eleven who had been closest to him while he dwelt on earth. So we must dismiss this objection from our minds, that it is a handicap not to have known Jesus as a man in space-time.

But we have never seen a light, either, such as Paul saw. On the other hand, however, we do see a light which he never saw. There was no New Testament in his time. He helped to write it. There were no Gospels, telling simply about the way Jesus lived—those four precious books with a heavenly light shining through their pages. If Paul had lived a hundred years later, he might indeed have had a vision, but he would not have needed one; for he would have had the books we have, bringing the Light of the world into our homes. As it was, this vision was indispensable. But I dare say that Paul himself would rather have had a manual with which he could live day by day than a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, which shone round about him only one day of his life.

The same holds true with regard to the voice that Paul heard. For, though he did not see Jesus, Jesus did speak to him. There was no way at that time in which Jesus could speak to him save by an audible voice. That is not

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the case to-day. What Jesus said as well as how he lived is set down for us in the Gospels. All the habitual accents of his feeling and elements of his teaching await us there whenever we turn back to the old pages, forever new, and, instead of scanning them hurriedly, take time to think these words over, and let them sink into our souls, and accept them as guideposts on the road to right living.

Not only had Paul no advantage over us in seeing this light and hearing this voice, since we have the Gospels, but he did have a disadvantage which we have been spared. For he had been Christ's enemy. He had done everything in his power to withstand and offset and check the spread of the movement which centered in the crucified Nazarene. He had an enormous obstacle to overcome in his own thinking before he could set out for himself on the way which he had tried to bar for others. After all, though the gospel might strike us more forcibly if it came to us first after we were grown up, yet no doubt we ought to be grateful for the privilege of having always been taught to regard Jesus with reverence. For at least that has saved us from having ever been his enemies. Instead of being envious of Paul, it is proper for us to realize that he had no advantages which we have not, and a serious disadvantage which we do not share, in his approach to the radiant and renewing adventure which turned him from a narrow-minded, cruel-hearted, self-assertive legalist into a broad-minded, kind-hearted, self-denying exemplar and spokesman of the free grace of God to sinners.

Why, then, having been Christ's enemy, was he vouchsafed so eminent a mercy as this heavenly vision? Why

should it be given to him to know for certain that we can go no further than to hope that we believe? We may be sure that, despite his perverse opposition to new truth, something in Paul prepared him to receive this revelation of God's nature and will. God's gifts are never imparted arbitrarily, without regard for the condition of their recipients. And I suggest that the explanation lies in the fact that, though he was in the wrong, yet Paul was, and had long been, deeply in earnest about religion. It was a lamentable thing, to be sure, to have been a persecutor of Christians; but, since Paul had been sincere in his persecution by the brightest light he had received until then, it was far less lamentable to act as he had done, in zeal for religion, than to be a skeptical dilettante like Agrippa, who could hear one of the most persuasive sermons ever preached, and then go out to carry on with the rest of the day's festive program, probably with hardly a thought, after he left the audience chamber, of the prisoner at whose hearing he had been present. If we are looking for a reason why Christ does not seem as real to us as he did to Paul, we shall probably find it in the fact that in attitude toward sacred things we are more like Agrippa on a pleasure tour than like Paul trying with all his might, however mistakenly, to serve God. We are not enough in earnest about eternal truth.

We do not have to remain thus indifferent, however, unless we want to. If we will, we can be as serious in pursuit of righteousness as ever Paul was. The drive of his life was along religious lines, both before and after his discovery of Christ. If the drive of our lives is also along

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religious lines, we too can discover Christ. Every man needs to make that discovery for himself; for it is only too possible to know a great deal about Christ without knowing him at all. And when we come to know Jesus at first hand, then we, like Paul, find that power in religion—a power at work within us, and at work through us upon the world, to set wrongs right and make life nobler—which we cannot but feel is the most urgent need of the world in the chaos and among the gloomy omens of our tense and difficult time.

Let me remind you again that we know, from Paul's example, in what direction to look for this discovery. We are not to start by looking in tomes of philosophy for a rational explanation of all things. That comes afterwards; and no theology we ever work out will be final, for to comprehend being as a whole passes the capacity of our little minds. Instead, we are to look directly to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Most of us do not look at him often enough, or long enough, in the Gospels. But we can hear the voice and see the light there, just as clearly as Paul did on the Damascus road, if we want to.

And when we do thus find the Master behind the mists of conventional opinion and of our own habitual inattention to religious reality, he will take us by surprise as he took Paul. For, though we have revered him always, we are far from having understood him. We shall find in him exactly the guidance we need. He will give us a new starting point and new road directions for living.

We shall gain from him a new hope, which he guarantees, of life's ultimate fulfillment. We shall learn from him, as Paul did, how to transcend our moral limitations and grow to heroic stature in the service of God's will—that is, of fair dealing and general amity and helpfulness, in our homes, in our neighborhoods, and so on out through the world.

Yes, what the world needs is men and women of vision like Paul. And what happened to Paul, to make him a man of vision, was not different in kind, though it was different in manner, from what happens to people nowadays, provided we are sufficiently in earnest about religion to be looking for the power in it that can make the world over on a better plan, instead of treating it as a mere adjunct to worldly living, a doctrinal scheme to be held at the margin of our minds, a device for insuring us at little cost the felicities of heaven after we have had reluctantly to surrender the felicities of earth. When the heavenly vision comes to a man, religion takes on a fresh glory and grander dimensions. It expands until it fills the whole life and becomes one with it. And its essence is seen to be a simple and practical, yet splendid and immortal, comradeship with Jesus, at daily tasks and in humble places, until in due season our Friend shall lead us on into the everlasting abode of the blessed.



IX

*The Many-Sided Christ*

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CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

PASTOR EMERITUS, BROADWAY TABERNACLE  
NEW YORK CITY

CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON was born in 1860 at Cambridge, Ohio. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan with the degrees of B.S. and A.B. He received the degree of S.T.B. from Boston University. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him.

He was ordained in the Congregational ministry and was pastor of Central Church, Chelsea, Mass., and of Broadway Tabernacle, New York City. He was a fellow of the Yale Corporation until 1924.

He has traveled extensively and has preached and lectured in all parts of the country. He has been in demand as a teacher and preacher at theological seminaries.

He is the author of many books. Many of these books are sermons that were delivered at Broadway Tabernacle, such as *Doctrine and Deed*, *The New Crusade*, *Things Fundamental*. He was the Beecher Lecturer on Preaching at Yale, and *The Building of the Church* was published. Some of his recent books are *Five Present-Day Controversies*, *Five World Problems*, *Cardinal Ideas of Isaiah*, *Cardinal Ideas of Jeremiah*, *International Peace*.



## IX

### THE MANY-SIDED CHRIST

CHARLES E. JEFFERSON

*On his head were many crowns.*

REVELATION 19: 12.

NINETEEN hundred years ago there lived on a rocky island in the Ægean Sea an exile by the name of John. He was an exile because he was a Christian. The island was lonely, and the life of the exile was desolate. In his loneliness he meditated often on Jesus Christ, his Master. On one Sunday suddenly the whole spiritual universe seemed to open out before him, and he saw Jesus more vividly than he had ever seen him before. His face was majestic, his eyes burned like fire, and on his head were many crowns. That is the language of symbolism. That is the symbolic way of saying that John perceived that Jesus was supreme in all the fields of action. He was sovereign in all the realms of power. He was ruler in all the kingdoms of life. All sovereignties were gathered up in him. He was the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Every careful reader of the New Testament is deeply impressed by the large number of names which are given to Jesus. On close scrutiny it is seen that these names were not given to him by others, but were chosen and applied to himself by himself. He seemed to take delight in choosing a variety of names in order to show forth the range of his personality and the scope of his mission. His

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favorite title was "Son of Man." That occurs many times in the Gospels. When you turn the pages of the Gospel according to Matthew you read, "The Son of man had nowhere to lay his head," "The Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins," "The Son of man is lord of the sabbath," "The Son of man came eating and drinking," "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" The expression occurs twenty-five times in that one Gospel. When he calls himself the Son of Man he is saying: "I am the son of humanity. I am the child of mankind. I am the real man, the ideal man, the kind of man that God wants a man to be. I am *the* man."

But he was not content with this title alone. He was in the habit of saying, "I am the light of the world." That was even more pretentious than the other title. It is an amazing claim for a man to make that he is the light of the world, because we cannot live without light. We are dependent on the light of the sun. We Americans are very clever in manufacturing artificial light, but we cannot live on it. If the light of the sun were removed, we should all fade away. Jesus says, "I am the light of the world," and by saying that he asserts that without him humanity would droop and die.

On another occasion he said, "I am the bread of life." There are times when we want nothing so much as bread. Occasionally we like cake, but there are times when bread is far better than cake. We have all experienced moments when the most delicious thing in the world was just plain bread. Without bread we cannot live. Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." He said it to a company of men who

had recently experienced the pangs of hunger. They knew what it was to be hungry, and they knew what it was to be filled. It was to those men that he said, "I am the bread of life."

On another occasion he said, "I am the water of life." He said it to a woman of Samaria at Jacob's well. She had nothing in her mind at that particular moment but water. She wanted water more than anything else. Jesus said, "If you knew who I am, you would ask of me, and I would give you living water."

At another time he said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." This was on the last night of his life. His disciples were brooding over the thought of separation. Death was coming and would cut the bonds by which Jesus and his disciples were bound together. He says to them: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Without me ye can do nothing." He expected these men to work after he was gone; therefore it was incredible that death was going to cut the bonds by which they were bound together. Death cuts no bonds between Jesus and those who love him. He is the vine. We are the branches.

On another occasion he said, "I am the door." He said it on the day on which a blind man whose eyes had been opened had been cast out of the synagogue. The ecclesiastical leaders in Jerusalem were dogmatic and tyrannical men. They had no hesitation in excommunicating a man if the man dared to displease them. This poor blind beggar was ignominiously cast out, and this is what Jesus said: "I am the door. By me a man can come in and go out and find pasture." That means that no man is de-

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pendent for his salvation upon the decision of ecclesiastical lords. The way is always open to God through him.

On that same day he called himself "the good shepherd." Palestine was a land of sheep and shepherds. Every Jew knew the characteristics of a shepherd. The flocks were always small and it was possible for a shepherd to know every sheep by name. Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd. I know every sheep by its name, and I am willing to lay down my life for the sheep."

In the upper room on the last night, when the disciples were all confused and depressed, Jesus said, "I am the way." A fog had blown in and obliterated all the familiar landmarks. The disciples did not know which way to turn or in what direction to start out. When one of them said, "I do not know the way," Jesus replied, "I am the way." He went on to add, "I am the truth." These men were to go out and preach the truth, but they did not know what the truth was. They shrank from the ordeal of instructing the nations of the earth. Jesus said, "I am the truth." They felt that their very life was being taken out of them by the departure of Jesus. They could not conceive how they could live without him. Jesus said: "I am the life. My life is going to pulsate in you." Sometime before this Jesus had said to two women who were weeping in the cemetery at Bethany, "I am the resurrection." They were mourning over the death of their brother. They believed in the resurrection; but this gave them no comfort, because the resurrection was so far off. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection."

This same Jesus meets the exile on the Isle of Patmos,

and he says to him, "I am the Alpha and the Omega." Those are the names, as you know, of the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. He goes on to explain: "I am the first and the last. I am the beginning and the ending." In other words, "All life begins and ends in me." Later on Jesus says to the same exile, "I am the bright and morning star." Darkness brooded over the face of the earth. The whole universe was plunged in gloom. There seemed to be no hope of deliverance anywhere. The brute forces were in the ascendancy. Spiritual forces were impotent and everywhere defeated. But to this man, oppressed by the darkness, Jesus says: "I am the bright and morning star. I am the star that points to the dawn. I am the star that tells you of the coming morning." Let us think, then, this morning, about the many-sided Christ.

We need a many-sided Christ because we are many-sided creatures. The psychologists tell us that we are made up of intellect and emotion and will, and we believe that this is so. We are all conscious of the fact that we have thoughts and emotions and that we make decisions. We need a Christ therefore who can appeal to our mind and also one who can satisfy our heart and also one who can brace our will. But we are more than intellect and emotion and volition. We are a bundle of appetites and passions, and every appetite craves a different sort of gratification and every passion burns with a fire all its own. We have aspirations and yearnings and longings, and every aspiration climbs by a different stairway toward

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the stars. We need a Christ who can meet us on every stair in our upward climbing.

We are always changing because we are creatures in a process of development. Once we were a baby, and then we became a child, and later on we became a youth, and later on they called us an adult; but in our adult life we have been changing all the time. We were one thing in the twenties and another thing in the thirties and another thing in the forties. If we are in the forties now, we are certain to be different in the fifties, and still different in the sixties, and something different still in the seventies and eighties, and in the nineties, if God lets us live so long. Our needs are always changing, and to meet these needs we must have a many-sided Christ. We must have a Christ who will meet us at every point along the difficult and ascending way.

We are creatures of fluctuating moods. We are never just the same on any two consecutive days. We are thermometers and we go up and down. We are barometers, and sometimes the index points to "fair" and sometimes it points to "storm." We need a Christ who can meet us in all kinds of weather.

We can understand therefore why Christ chose so many names by which to image forth his character and personality. There are times when we want nothing so much as light. We say with Ajax in Homer's immortal poem, "Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more." But there are other times when we are not in conscious need of light. We are hungry. We want bread. There is nothing in the world that will satisfy us but bread. But again we

do not want bread. We want water. We would not exchange one tiny cup of water for all the bread in the world, for we are thirsty, and water is the one thing that we must have. There are other times, however, when we want nothing so much as a shepherd's care. We have lost our way and we are out in a storm, and only a shepherd can save us. Again, we need nothing so much as a star. We are discouraged. The sky is filled with midnight. Darkness broods over us. Hope has died. There seems no hope that the world will ever grow better. We need a star, a star that will speak to us of the dawn and tell us of the morning.

Now, this myriad-sidedness of Jesus Christ is expressed in the very structure of our New Testament. Did you ever ask yourself the question, Why do we have four Gospels? Why would not one have been enough? The answer is that Christ is so many-sided he could not have been completely presented to us by any one Evangelist. The Gospels are all different from one another, and the more you study them the greater these differences are. To a person who reads only carelessly the four Gospels are very much alike, and in some respects they are alike. The similarities are very many and also very impressive. For instance, in every Gospel Jesus holds the center of the stage. In all of them we meet the twelve apostles. In all of them we get acquainted with Martha and Mary, with Herod and Pilate, and with several other leading characters. We are face to face with a few cardinal events in all the Gospels: the trial of Jesus, his crucifixion, his resurrection. No wonder many people assume that the

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four Gospels are quite alike, but no one assumes that who is not ignorant. Ignorance is a kind of darkness which blots out all distinctions. There are many persons to whom all music is alike. They can tell the difference between Yankee Doodle and the Long Meter Doxology, but they are not impressed by the difference between Mozart and Beethoven, or between Wagner and Puccini. There are some who pay no attention to the singing of the birds. To them all bird notes are alike. They can tell the difference between a rooster and a robin, but not the difference between a catbird and a hermit thrush. There are people who care very little for flowers. To them all flowers are much alike. They are all pretty and most of them have brilliant colors, but beyond this their knowledge does not go. They can tell the difference between a sunflower and a pansy, but they make no distinction between a tulip and a lily, or between a peony and a dahlia. There are many persons who are so ignorant of the New Testament that they cannot tell one Gospel from the other, but persons who cannot distinguish the Gospels from one another are missing more than they know. It is in the recognition of distinctions and in meditating upon the differences that we get an enormous amount of knowledge and not a little satisfaction. That is why I am always urging you to live with the New Testament and to live in it, to read it again and again and again, to keep reading it always, for it is only by reading it constantly that one comes at last to know what the New Testament really is. Let us see how these Gospels differ from one another.

When you open the First Gospel and turn to the fifth



chapter, you find this statement concerning Jesus: "He opened his mouth and taught them." That is, Jesus is presented to you at once as a teacher, and all through this First Gospel he is opening his mouth to teach. It is in this First Gospel alone that you have the Sermon on the Mount complete. It is in this Gospel that you have fifteen parables, and a series of wonderful chapters of instruction beginning with the twentieth chapter. When you turn to the very last page of the Gospel, you find Jesus saying, before a cloud received him from men's sight: "Go, disciple the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them." This means that the disciples of Jesus are to be teachers. They are to unfold and apply the principles of the Supreme Teacher.

But there are many persons who are not interested in ideas. They do not want to be taught. All teachers are to them a good deal of a bore. It is surprising how many people do not care to think. They have no use for thinkers. Thinkers make them weary. But these people have great admiration for workers. They love a man who does things. There are persons who are thrilled by an idea. A new or a beautiful idea can thrill them down to their toes. There are other people who are never thrilled by any idea. They are thrilled by a noble deed. They have no admiration for thinkers, but tremendous admiration for doers. This type of person needs a particular Gospel, and they have it in the Gospel according to Mark. In Mark, Jesus as teacher does not stand at the front. Mark paints us the portrait of a hero, a hero who performs

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mighty deeds. It would be interesting sometime for you to study the first chapter of Mark intensely and see how different it is from anything you find in Matthew. There is one word in that chapter which occurs eleven times, the word "straightway." In the King James Version the word occurred only four times, but it occurs eleven times in the Revised Version. This is because the Revised Version translates the Greek word always in the same way. The King James Version tried to break the monotony, and so sometimes it translated the Greek word "immediately" and sometimes "forthwith" and sometimes "straightway." But in the Revised Version "forthwith" and "immediately" are dropped, and we always have the word "straightway." Mark says that straightway Jesus did this and straightway he did that and straightway he did something else. He does not say straightway he said this or straightway he said that. Mark throws all the emphasis on Jesus' deeds. He tells us he went into the synagogue, but he does not tell us what he said there. He tells us he went into Simon Peter's home, but does not tell us what he said there. He tells us that Jesus made a circuit of the Galilean cities, but he does not tell us what he preached on that journey. Mark is not interested in teaching. He does not seem to care much for ideas. He is very enthusiastic over what Jesus did. He tells us that in the synagogue he healed a man who had an unclean spirit, and he tells us that in the home of Simon Peter he healed a woman who had a fever, and he tells us that in his circuit of Galilean cities he healed a man who was a leper. Jesus speaks only five times in this chapter, and in none of the

five sentences is there a word of teaching. He says to two men, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." He says to the Twelve, "Let us go to the next towns, for I want to preach there." He says to the unclean spirit, "Come out of him." And he says to the leper, "Be ye clean, but do not say anything about what I have done." Mark is not interested primarily in the ideas of Jesus, and therefore in his Gospel you have only four parables—two of them little bits of things, one consisting of three verses and one of four. There is no Sermon on the Mount in Mark. From first to last it is a Gospel which holds up Jesus as a doer of heroic deeds.

But there are times when we are not interested in heroes any more than we are interested in ideas. Teachers and heroes make us weary. We can stand them for a while, but we do not want them always. There are times when we need something quite different from ideas or from a shining example. We want kindness and sympathy and affection. We want to be loved. We want the tender touch of a physician, for we are sick. We are bruised. We are wounded and bleeding. We need the skill of a physician. In the Third Gospel we have Jesus as a great physician. The Gospel was written by a physician, and it was natural that he should respond to the physician's side of Jesus' personality. The Third Gospel is the most tender of all the Gospels. Nowhere else is Jesus so sympathetic and so affectionate. In this Gospel he is especially kind to the poor, for the poor were so generally neglected. In this Gospel Jesus is kind to women, because women in Palestine were looked down on. In this Gospel Jesus was

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kind to publicans. Luke tells us with great delight of little Zacchæus in the sycamore tree. In this Gospel Jesus is kind to the Samaritans. Luke is the only Gospel that tells us the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this Gospel Jesus is kind to foreigners. Luke takes delight in telling us about the first sermon in Nazareth in which Jesus reminded his hearers that Elijah was kind to a woman in Sidon and that Elisha was kind to a King of Syria. It was the kindness of Jesus to classes which were ostracized and hated that the Gentile physician took a special delight in portraying.

But there come times in every life when we do not want a teacher and we do not care for a hero and we do not long for a physician. What we want is a savior. We want somebody to deliver us from our sins. We are conscious of our weakness. We cannot break bad habits. We cannot get rid of ugly dispositions. We cannot escape the gnawing of remorse. We want a savior. And in the Fourth Gospel we have the Saviour revealed. At the very beginning of the Gospel we hear a strong voice saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." You turn a few pages and you read, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You meet the Saviour all the way through the Fourth Gospel, and almost at the very end of the book it is stated, "These things are writ-

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ten, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye may have life in his name."

It is because Jesus Christ meets us in all our needs and in all our moods that he becomes the Saviour of the whole world. In every one of the Gospels he is the great teacher, and in every one he is the supreme hero, the man who goes about doing good. In every one he is the great physician, gathering about him the sick and the forlorn. In every one he is the Saviour, forgiving men their transgressions and endowing them with a new life. But the emphasis of each of the Gospels is different from the emphasis of the other three. In the First Gospel the teacher is first, in the Second the hero is first, in the Third the physician is first, in the Fourth the Saviour is first. We need all the four Gospels to satisfy our needs.

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;  
More than all in thee I find;  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,  
Heal the sick, and lead the blind."



X

*The Benefits of Worship*

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SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN

MINISTER, CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN was born in 1864 at Wellington, Salop, England. He was educated at the Wesleyan College at Richmond. The honorary degrees, D.D., S.T.D., L.H.D., Litt.D., LL.D., Ph.D., have been conferred upon him by various colleges and universities.

He was a Methodist minister. He was pastor of the Metropolitan Temple, New York City, and for the past three decades has been pastor of the Central Congregational Church, Brooklyn.

He was president of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. He is vitally connected with World Conferences on Faith and Order. He is a popular speaker at Theological Seminaries and Universities.

He is the author of many books, some of the most well-known being *Charles Darwin and Other English Thinkers*, *Ambassadors of God*, *Imagination and Religion*, *Everyday Questions and Answers*.

He is the speaker in the National Sunday Forum over the radio every Sunday afternoon.

It can truly be said that he is one of the most colorful ministers in Protestantism to-day.



## X

### *THE BENEFITS OF WORSHIP*

S. PARKES CADMAN

ONE of to-day's favorite distinctions is between spiritual and institutional religion. The first, we are assured, is inward, real, and vital; the second, outward, formal, and conventional. Spiritual religion, it is said, consists of the soul's response to life's major verities, while institutional religion is merely our compliance with certain appointed ordinances. The former at its worst is declared better than the latter at its best; since institutional religion is nothing more than a superficial addition which is always exposed to the perils of professionalism.

I am convinced that this distinction is false in theory and detrimental in practice. We can agree that a living, active faith ushers its possessor into the felt presence of his Creator, admits him to fellowship with eternal values, and sets his affections on things above rather than on those of the earth.

But since we are what we are and where we are, experience demonstrates that one might as well attempt to separate the body from the soul as separate the outward expression of what we believe from its inward hold on us. When men and women are profoundly convinced of spiritual realities and submit to their control in daily living, they become witnesses to these realities.

For these reasons, the New Testament exhorts us not

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to "forsake the assembling of ourselves together." The heart which has been transformed in secret must openly reveal its adoration because it has an instinctive desire to convey its experience to others. Not only Judaism and Christianity, but every effective religion, has its temples and sanctuaries, rites and ceremonies, rules and ordinances. These protect character, stimulate its growth, and enlist the soul's energies in its highest aspiration. They enable the worshiper to confirm his brethren in their faith. They prepare him for life's inescapable responsibilities. The most serviceable believers communicate between the mount of vision and the plain of daily duty. They use the grace inspired by the closet of prayer and the sanctuary of praise to consecrate afresh the home, the factory, the store, and the office.

## INDIFFERENCE HAS FAILED

Prejudiced efforts to obscure these manifest gains are bound to fail. Indeed, the widespread indifference to church and synagogue has already failed. It has vulgarized the nation, coarsened its fiber, lowered its aims, deadened its conscience, and degraded its pursuits and pleasures. Clearly enough, faithful attendants on religious worship are far more essential to public sanity and welfare than are the multitudes who habitually neglect that worship.

The frequent plea that such devotion is a matter for one's personal choice has been largely overworked. Surely it is plain that the divine revelation on which all true religion is based cannot be at men's complete disposal.

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We are what we are by God's will, and if we would realize what we ought to be, we are bound to obey that will.

Strange conceits were bred by our spasmodic temporal affluence. People began to arrogate to themselves an imaginary independence which worked havoc with individual character and national well-being.

Life's testings show that human freedom has no such scope and function as many attribute to it. Quite otherwise, it is strictly regulated by an authority beyond our control. That freedom cannot change the fixed elements of our existence, nor can it substitute human moods and fancies for God's decreed essential without incurring loss and danger.

When He vouchsafes us intervals of spiritual recreation, these are not solely for private uses. We have to re-invest them in fine social contacts and imperative social obligations. They are intended for our manifestation in profitable word and deed.

## RELIGION MUST BE EVIDENT

You will say that a man's religion is what he is when he is alone. I reply that a man's religion is sadly deficient until his fellows are aware of what he is. So the visible organization of religion exists for the specific and that other men may see our good works and glorify the Father who is in heaven.

The Christian Church provides ample means for the privilege. Her cathedrals, sanctuaries, sacraments; her stated services, places for prayer, thanksgiving, and meditation, and her philanthropic and evangelizing agencies

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are precious fruits of the ages of faith. All are to be cherished and observed with fidelity in order that we may know the love of Him who has created and redeemed us, and crowned our lives with his loving-kindness.

Out of these governing motives came the Jewish Sabbath, the Lord's Day, the Holy Supper, baptism, the matchless literature of the Bible and its kindred books, the molding of successive civilizations, the making of powerful States. Science, art, and architecture are the undischarged debtors of ancestors who believed that religion was the prime business of home and nation, and who forsook not "the assembling of 'themselves' together."

Of course we can do otherwise. We can refuse to sustain the Church, which is Christianity's most characteristic product. We can ignore the lofty claims of the one institution which offers our newborn life to God in baptism, hallows the family in marriage, stresses the weekly day of rest and gladness, enlists our noblest faculties, engages our best emotions, and preserves our individuality in a mechanistic age.

But such an attitude will rob us of the strength and resolution needed for a very critical era, and a churchless generation will presently recoil upon itself in conspicuous weakness and disappointment.

## INTEGRAL PART OF THE GOSPEL

For institutional Christianity is not an artificial adornment. It is an integral part of the inwardness of the gospel we are commanded to proclaim to the world. Without its visible witness for God, the spiritualities of society

decay, personal conduct becomes lamentable, political ethics decline, and the national morale proves unequal to the national requirements.

Sooner or later the people who treat the adoration of their Maker with indifference fall short in conscience and duty. It is irrelevant to urge that some notable benefactors have no use for religious observances. In nearly every instance these honorable citizens inherited their substantial qualities from parents who forsook not the assembling of themselves together. Their benevolence was nurtured in the Lord's house.

But what of oncoming generations which are deprived of that splendid heritage of faith? What of your sons and daughters who will be thrust in life's battle against secularism, selfishness, lust, and pride unfortified by spiritual training and discipline? If millions around us are existing on inherited merits, should not the millions who follow us here have a chance to prove our sources of their souls' renewal in divine realities?

I do not plead for an inflexible Sabbatarianism. "The old-fashioned Sunday" had its generous recompenses for those who kept it holy. It sanitated men and nations. It furnished Church and State with devout, earnest, and godly servants of the Lord. It lit the lamps of sacrifice and adoration in the homes of the plain folk. It dispatched the ambassadors of Christ's gospel to distant lands buried in darkness and fatalism.

Away with the notion that libertines, self-lovers, and the greedy of gain who would commercialize the Lord's Day can dictate its epitaph! So long as right-minded men and

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women crave wisdom and virtue and loathe the seductions of folly and vice, they will repair to God's sanctuary to give thanks for the countless benefits received at his hands and to ask for "those benefits which are requisite and necessary as well for the body and soul."

XI

*The Great Expectation*

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JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

MINISTER OF PREACHING, ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON was born in 1878 at Decatur, Tex. He was educated at Hardy Institute and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Literature, Doctor of Divinity, and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him.

He was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Paris, Tex.; a non-sectarian Church in Saint Louis; the Liberal Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; the City Temple, London, England; the Church of Divine Paternity, New York City; minister of St. Paul's Church, Overbrook, Pa. He is now the minister of preaching at St. James Episcopal Church, Philadelphia.

He is well known in America and in England. He writes for the press and publishes many books.

Some of his best-known books are: *The Eternal Christ*, *The Builders*, *The Ambassador*, *Some Living Masters of the Pulpit*, *Preaching in London*, *Preaching in New York*, and *The New Preaching*.



# XI

## THE GREAT EXPECTATION

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

*The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly  
come to his temple, even the messenger of the  
covenant.* MALACHI 3: 1.

*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in  
peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*  
LUKE 2: 29, 30.

THESE two texts join the last book of the Old Testament with the first scenes of the New; and though far apart in time, they are united by one Great Expectation. Between them flowed four hundred years of tragic vicissitude, but that mighty hope, though often defeated and long delayed, still reigned. Like an arch of promise, it not only spanned that long period, but it became more spiritual, more luminous. Nothing in our human annals is more thrilling than the history of the Messianic hope in the Hebrew heart, forefelt in the Old Bible and fulfilled in the new; the insight of faith which saw the day-star in the bosom of midnight and followed it through the ages.

In the Boston Library, Sargent has painted the history of the origin of religion, its dim beginnings in beast worship, and the tangled maze of hopes and fears out of which dawned, slowly, the all-transfiguring vision of the one true God. How appealing the figure of the Hebrew slave at prayer, and how vivid the answer to his prayer

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when the hand of God is put forth from the unseen to stay the arm of the despot—a hand expressive of vast and tender power! Below are the prophets, with Moses in the center, ranging from the earliest seers who saw but dimly, to the latest singers who stand with shining faces and uplifted hand, expecting the coming of Christ. My favorite is the figure of Hosea—the Whittier of the Bible—whose face, drawn from the face of Coventry Patmore, the poet and mystic, is that of a youth, beautiful with benign and tender light. The vision of these servants of the ideal exalts us with a sense of the spiritual struggle of the race, and the high mission of the prophetic genius.

Above the confusions and terrors of their times the prophets held one tremulous, yet triumphant, hope which their tortured hearts refused to surrender—the hope that God had not broken his covenant with the race. The high intention at the beginning stood firm, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,” and that note never ceased to sound in the silence of their spiritually sensitive souls. Always it is faith in God that kindles faith in human possibility. In all ages those souls truest to themselves have found in the high purpose of God for humanity the clue to the mingled tragedy and splendor of history, and that faith has filled the night-sky with stars. In the souls of the prophets it was faith in the veracity of God that defeated discouragement and despair—the trust that held when they lost all other trusts. They could not think, even in their darkest hours, that God would allow the human soul to be betrayed and mocked by its own purest and holiest insights. When they foresaw the com-

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ing of the Soul of Man—the coming, that is, of a higher type of humanity—they went beyond the cynical facts, by faith interpreting the Mind of God.

### THE PROPHETS' MIGHTY FAITH

All through the music of the prophets one hears a note of expectation, a grand and solemn optimism. However threatening the scene of national life, however terrible their denunciations of evil, those heroic souls kept their speech free from the poison of pessimism. Underneath all their eloquence lay the framework of a mighty faith: first, that which is not based upon justice must perish; second, God has revealed justice to his people; third, humanity exists to realize justice; and, finally, justice will be realized at last. The four principles of faith, the four invincible certitudes of prophecy, constituted its power, its passion, and its consolation. And the last of the four, it has been truly said, in equipping it with hope for all eternity, preserved it from the crushing influence of time, with its deadening inertia and its depressing apostasies. These sons of the twilight lived with the future in their souls, eager and forward-looking, their attitude a gesture of expectation and appeal.

So far Malachi. When we close the Scroll of Prophecy and open the Book of Fulfillment, how familiar is the scene before us—familiar as the home of our childhood and interwoven with its memories. A peasant mother with her husband and child are climbing the steps of the temple, bringing two turtledoves as an offering of purification as she presents her babe before the Lord, according

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to the law and custom of her religion. It was a simple scene, such as one might have witnessed any day in the temple. As Father Stanton used to say, it is the last glance over the shoulder at Christmas before the shadow of the passion falls. Even in that scene, so simple and lovely, with its union of infancy and old age in the fellowship of hope, there was a prophecy of the sword that should pierce the heart of the mother for the healing of many woes: "That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Learned scribes and haughty rulers knew not the meaning of that little group; they never do—such things are revealed only to babes, and to such as keep a heart of childlike faith. But in every age, in every land, there are elect souls who watch for the divine advent—as Emerson went about peeping into every cradle, looking for a Messiah—and in the temple that day there were faithful hearts waiting for his coming: Simeon and Anna, two old people grown gray in hope, each of whom might have repeated the Browning lines:

"I am a watcher whose eyes have grown dim  
With looking for a star which breaks on him,  
Altered and worn and weak and full of tears."

If I were painting a symbolic picture of Hope, as did George Frederick Watts, I would select not a young woman but an old person—the face engraved by experience, the hands blue-veined and strong—like those two saints in the temple. Through the long years they waited, expecting each day to see the Chosen One appear, and ready to receive him. Others rejected him when he

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came, as we are apt to do, because he did not come as they thought he ought to come—as their creed said he would come—in startling splendor and conquering power.

But those two old saints, wise with the wisdom that grows not old, knew the Messiah when he came in lowly garb and welcomed him with open arms. How unforgettable is the picture; an old man takes a babe in his arms with a thrill of joy, his trembling voice breaking into a song of praise because he has lived to see the consolation of humanity, the salvation of the Lord. His faith had been justified, his hope fulfilled. Not many men are so fortunate as to be ready to die, willing to die, because the promise of life has ended in realization. More often it is the other way round, and men fall asleep weary of waiting for a dream to come true. The words of Simeon recall that scene at Ostia when Augustine and his mother sat in the window talking just before she passed to where, beyond this twilight, there is light. At last she said: "My son, I have no further joy in life. What I do here and why I remain here, I know not, now that the hope of the world is gone. One thing alone made me long to abide here for a little while, the desire to see thee a Catholic Christian ere I died. God hath granted me this more abundantly, in that I now see thee a servant of his, disdaining earthly bliss. What do I here?"

## VISION IN A DEPRESSION

Surely this lesson is sorely needed in this day of deep disappointment and depression, when so many hopes have been blighted, so many dreams deferred—the lesson, that

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is, that truth comes to those who expect it, watch for it, pray for it. It is so everywhere, in every field of human aspiration—as the astronomer, after long calculation, is convinced that a new star is hovering on the edge of the sky, hidden for ages. All the facts point to it. At last, peering through stronger glasses, he sees first a dim glimmer, and then a point of twinkling light. Darwin brooded for years over a huge mass of facts, seeking the law they concealed, and at last he came upon it—because he expected to find it. Of Charles Kingsley it was said that his work as a poet was marred by the conviction that something tremendous was going to happen about the middle of next week. Even so, but the world could spare its *littérateurs* better than it could spare its Kingsleys! Indeed, it is almost a definition of greatness to say that it greatly hopes; that it does not surrender to the weakness of despair, but lives expectantly.

## HOPEFUL ADVENTURERS

Nothing is easier than to be a pessimist. All a man has to do is to give up, let go, trust his darkest moods, and believe in the devil; the rest follows naturally. It is doubly easy to-day, fatally easy, to repeat the cynical beatitude, as if its wisdom were equal to its wit: Blessed is he that does not expect anything, for he shall not be disappointed. Not he. Such a man mistakes a sunrise for a house on fire, and fancies that he is wise. Only those who are truly wise and have a heart for great adventure can obey that other beatitude, so deeply engraved in the annals of missionary faith: Expect great things of God,

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attempt great things for God. Here is the true faith, which sees in the confusion of to-day foregleams of a greater and better to-morrow. It dares to pray for the coming of the kingdom of heaven, not in words only, but also, and much more, in works, watching for it the while as those who wait for the morning. It is a noble attitude, in that it reads the dark present in the context of a slow, eternal process, and finds its joy in labor for those who are to come after.

Such must be our attitude to-day, when so many bright expectancies are beshadowed by the vast tragedy of the world. Time out of mind, to go no further back than Plato and the Hebrew seers, men have dreamed of an ideal social order in which justice shall be the rule and liberty the sweet food of the people. Many have prayed for it, worked for it, looked for it, many of whom the world was not worthy; but it has not come true. These all died in faith, not having obtained the promise; and as Robertson of Brighton said, it would have shed a sunset glory upon their deathbeds, if, as they went out, they could have seen some new token for the race coming in—as at the dawn of a former salvation, hearts old and worn with expectation cried, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.” Nevertheless they kept the faith, and it will be justified at last, albeit to-day it seems like a far-off rumor amid the rumble of convulsions and catastrophes unprecedented.

## LOOKING FOR A NEW CITY

No more than they must we yield to despair, much less

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listen to the pessimism which tells us that after this ordeal of agony things will be as before, only worse; as Galsworthy seems to say in his play, "Foundations." No; the confusion will end—in time; but not so the thoughts that have been awakened, for humanity has gone to a school which must surely change its scheme of values. When London was burned long ago, the great builder, Christopher Wren, came forward with a plan for a new city with wide streets all leading to the house of common prayer which stands to-day as his monument. His plan was adopted, but could not be worked out because each householder insisted that his house should be built exactly where it was before. Surely it will not be so again. Even the dullest mind must see that it is no use to rebuild a social order which had in it the possibilities of the present tragedy. For ages we have been trying to build a humane order upon an inhumane basis. It cannot be done. To-day a new solidarity and a new miracle of sacrifice give us new hope of a time when a brave, large, brotherly spirit shall build on earth a City of Friends.

By the same token, we must live expectantly as to the future of the Church, now so baffled, so bewildered, so sorely tried. Never were the critics of the Church so relentless. They tell us that its arm-chair theology has been knocked to pieces in the rough and tumble of the world, that its ritual is mere rigmarole, that it is of no use save as a museum of relics preserved from a time far gone. Troubled by these strident rebukes of the man in the street, many are seeking after "messages" and "re-statements," and even "apologies," but to no avail. Truly



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we live in the days of the Church Humilitant, when the Church is taunted with good-natured contempt and an ever-growing neglect. Hence an attitude of defeatism, if not a spiritual inferiority-complex, in the Church itself, of which it needs to be healed. For there are signs of a better day, despite many dismal predictions. There is a passion for reality, and a yearning for a deeper, more experimental fellowship in which old schisms shall be healed. There is a longing for prophetic leadership and, above all and through all, a desire to realize great social and democratic ideals under spiritual influences. Many humiliations are teaching us humility, and we may yet learn that the Church does not rest upon creed or ritual, but upon Christ, its Lord and leader.

It may be that God is preparing some deeper disclosure of himself in the midst of this bitter tragedy; but that is his business. One thing is clear, if there is to be a revival of faith and renewal of vision, it will come to those who expect it, who are praying for it and watching for it. Meantime, our business is to seek the mind of Christ, that so we may make the things of the spirit a kingdom of realities here and now in the lives we live on the earth. The Church does not exist to do everything, but to do the one thing without which nothing else is worth doing. If it is in any worthy sense the Body of Christ, it must be a union of those who love in the service of those who suffer, and thus "organize God's light." Not in a day can the Church exorcise the ills wrought by a godless generation of politicians in every nation who have scouted its teaching. But it can help to heal the wounds of a

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world in agony, and the full, broad, deep outgoing of its compassion none can deny. Just now its ministry is there, or nowhere.

There is, however, a profounder expectation and appeal in his theme to every follower of him who came as a babe to the temple. The deepest desire of the Christian heart, its holiest longing, is to realize Christ, not as a hero in history, not as a figure loving amid the shadows of ideas, but as a Living Presence. Dale, Bushnell, and Tauler tell us how they read about Christ, argued about him, brooded over his truth for years, and one day at the corner of the street, so to speak, they met him in a new, more intimate, more revealing fellowship—like the disciples at Emmaus. They went back to the familiar pages of the Gospels and found them radiant with a light that was never on sea or land. Shall we ever know that assurance? Now we see through a glass darkly; shall we ever see the Living Truth face to face? Shall we ever know that which is now hinted to us in signs, symbols, sacraments? Yes, if we are faithful and expectant. So of old the Lord came to those who waited in the temple, so he will come to us.

## LIFE AN UNFINISHED SYMPHONY

In a world wistful with half-revelations we keep vigil in our hearts, waiting for the coming of the Sons of God—those large, eternal Fellows who will not only interpret the lower by the higher, but give the highest command. Often disappointed, but never losing hope, we are sure of one thing, that the curtain has not yet rung up on the last act of the world drama; there is more, and that more

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may come any moment with surprising and satisfying suddenness. Human life is a symphony, but it is an unfinished symphony, and we are waiting the last movement, the lost, or yet undiscovered, chord which will give meaning to the discord at the very moment when it is resolved. That is melody. We cannot hear the birds sing, look into the eyes of a friend, or behold the heroisms and loyalties of men, without knowing that there is melody; but it is a broken melody, and "nature slides into semitones, sinks into a minor, blunts into a ninth, and still we wait the C-major of this life."

Yet always there is a sense of Something very near, trying to lay hands upon us; Something seeking to make itself seen and heard and felt. The world aches with the stress of a Silence that tries to speak, but it is tonguetied as in sleep, because we do not hear. Here and there a hint, a gleam, of the Eternal bursts through, and as much, or as little, as we see is our religion. Now and then in the face of the very young or the very old we see the flash of a Face, looming in the distance, veiled in beauty, yet coming nearer and nearer—the Face of the Future Man, the Christ-Man, who will be gentle, just, heroic, happy, and free. That Face will yet appear here on this blood-bathed earth, where even to-day the trumpet is still blown for war; that Image will break through every window of the world. God is the everlasting future!

## HUMANITY'S HEROIC HOPE

There remains the great expectation of eternal life, the ancient, high, heroic faith of humanity. To-day it is not

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simply a wistful yearning, but an eager, insistent longing for reunion with those torn from us. And not with them only, but with all those who left us in the long ago, taking our hearts with them when they went away. Is faith a dream? Nay, but the lack of it is the dream, and failing it all the lore of life is but a tale told by an idiot. Aspiration is not mocked; God is not the God of the dead but of those who are alive forevermore. He is as young as the dawn, and as hopeful, and as ready for new adventure. He who filled our hearts with the hauntings of an eternal to-morrow will not leave us in the dust. He is Life, he is Love, he is Joy, and his immortality is stamped, as his signature, upon all that he has made. In him we live here and hereafter, and because he lives we shall live also, deathless as our Father is deathless:

“Lord, where Thou art our happy dead must be;  
Unpierced as yet the Sacramental Mist,  
But we are nearest them when nearest Thee  
In solemn Eucharist.

Lord, we crave for those gone home to Thee,  
For those who made our earthly homes so fair;  
How little may we know, how little see,  
Only that Thou art there.

Dear hands, unclasped from ours, are clasping Thine,  
Thou holdest us forever in Thy heart;  
So close the one Communion—are we  
In very truth apart?

Lord, where Thou art our blessed dead must be,  
And if with Thee, what then their boundless bliss!  
Till Faith is sight, and Hope reality,  
Love's anchorage is this!”

XII

*The Mind of Christ*

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RAYMOND CALKINS

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RAYMOND CALKINS was born in 1869 at Buffalo, N. Y. He graduated from Harvard University with the A.B. and M.A. degrees. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Divinity School. The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity has been conferred upon him.

He was ordained in the Congregational ministry. He was pastor of Pilgrim Memorial Church, Pittsfield, Mass., and of State Street Church, Portland, Me. He is now pastor of the First Congregational Church, Cambridge, Mass.

He has been Beecher Lecturer on Preaching at Yale University.

He is the author of many books, the best known of which are *The Christian Idea in the Modern World*, *The Christian Church in the Modern World*, *The Eloquence of Christian Experience*, and *The Holy Spirit*.

He is a scholar, philosopher, and prophetic preacher.

## XII

### THE MIND OF CHRIST

RAYMOND CALKINS

*Have this mind in you which was also in  
Christ Jesus.* PHILIPPIANS 2: 5.

THE great need in our day is that the mind of Christ should be brought to bear on all the problems and difficulties which beset and vex the life of the world. What is needed above all else is the broad and free operation and application of the mind of Christ. If the mind of Christ could penetrate all our affairs, we should soon find our way out of the bewilderment which now baffles us, out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land.

The immediate necessity is that every Christian should understand that his prime duty at the present hour is to understand what the mind of Christ is, and then apply it directly upon present and practical problems. It is only so that the Church can make its influence and its witness felt. We are living in critical times. The last ten years have been called the most important years in the moral life of mankind. During the next ten years issues will be decided which will determine the moral life of the world for many generations. Greater changes, we are told, are impending to-day in the whole structure of human society than at any time since the ice age. There has not been an era in the whole history of the Church when its moral leadership was more needed. If at such a time the Church

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fluence felt, then it must be frankly admitted that those critics of the Church are justified who say that "the traditional religions, however valid and inspiring in the past, were made possible only by ignorance and that all the Western Churches are obsolescent—in power over the minds that count if not in actual numbers."<sup>1</sup>

It is not "numbers" which to-day should most concern the Church. The question which confronts and sharply challenges us is whether the Church is "obsolescent in power over the minds that count." Our greatest need to-day is not for more people who call themselves Christians, but for more people already calling themselves Christians who understand what it means to be a Christian. Mere numbers count for nothing at such an hour. Neither do pronouncements by Church leaders or by Church assemblies count for much, so long as the mind of the people as a whole who are Church members, and make up its constituency, is so little Christian. What should trouble our conscience to-day, and rouse us to action, is that it is so difficult, if it is not impossible, to distinguish between the mind of those who call themselves Christians, and those who do not; that the level of thinking, and thus of acting, is no higher amongst the one than amongst the other. What should concern us is that the rank and file of Church people do not grasp what the mind of Christ is, and are not bold and active in applying it to all our present problems. The Church will demonstrate that it

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Wilson, in "What I Believe," *The Nation*, January 27, 1932.



is not "obsolescent in power over the minds that count" only as a rapidly increasing number of its people who call themselves Christians recover a vivid sense of what the mind of Christ is, and become thus an active and penetrating influence in society, a force which guides and determines our social action. This is imperative, the insistent, the immediate duty of the Church in the day in which we live. It is only in this way that the Church can demonstrate its moral leadership and vindicate its claim to moral authority over the affairs of man. For the mind of Christ will be found to be far more searching, far more exacting, and far more effective than law, regulation, or legislation. It is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It is upon the mind of Christ working through individuals and shaping and inspiring our policies that we must depend to straighten out the tangles in our affairs. That is the only force that is equal to so huge a task.

What is the mind of Christ? It is not something that is vague and indefinite, difficult to apprehend, impracticable of application. On the contrary, it is something quite clear and concrete, easy to understand and capable of immediate use. Consider some of the characteristics of the mind of Christ.

In the first place, it is an independent mind: a mind that is able to rise above the current and conventional ideas that govern the conduct of the majority of men. The mind of Christ was not controlled by the ruling ideas

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of his day. On the contrary, he detached himself from them, rose above them, and viewed the whole structure of society from the higher vantage ground of his own outlook. One of the most distinctive characteristics of the mind of Christ lay in this independence of opinion. Again and again he said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, but I say unto you." His ideas did not conform to tradition and were not governed by custom. He was able to resist the compulsion of popular opinion and to frame his own standards of thinking and action.

Anyone who shares the mind of Christ must exercise the same capacity for independent opinion. He must be able to dispossess himself of all local and racial prejudice. In a word, he must be a nonconformist. It was a great saying of Emerson that to be a man it is necessary to be a nonconformist. Certainly it is necessary if one would be a Christian.

Such an attitude, it needs to be remembered, demands more than moral courage. It demands also moral insight. One must rid oneself, as Jesus rid himself, of predispositions acquired by tradition and training, which assume an almost sacred sanction and authority. Such ideas tend to form the very warp and woof of one's thinking and character; they become fixed and immovable. The capacity of moral and critical insight is destroyed. One becomes the victim, as it were, of the traditions of one clan or class. One loses both the desire and the ability to break through the social and economic and political theories in which one has grown up. One lives and moves and

has his being within a certain set of ideas above which he never rises. They are for him finalities which are not subject to review. To question them, to doubt them, to deny them is a kind of lese-majeste. Who does so is a kind of heretic, a traitor, a rank outsider.

Yet nothing is clearer than that all the progress which the world has ever made has been due to those who were capable of breaking through the hardened crust of conventional opinion, and blazing new paths, announcing new ideas: men like Socrates and Rabelais, Emerson, Swift and Ruskin, who were able to get beneath contemporary and conventional opinion, show up the shabbiness and insincerities of the existing order of things, shake the people out of their smug complacency, and so point the way to better things.

But the point to remember is that Jesus is the Supreme Example of this power of moral detachment and insight; of moral penetration and uncompromising criticism of conventional beliefs and customs. Consequently, people who call themselves Christian must seek to have in them the mind of Christ. We speak of the Imitation of Christ. We accept as a commonplace that we are to follow his example, walk in his steps, and undeviatingly accept his leadership. As an inevitable corollary, then, there must be the duty of preserving and cultivating this independence of mind, resisting the bondage of convention, of distrusting the axioms and shibboleths of traditional ideas. In a word, if we would be truly Christian, we must be capable of this form of mental penetration and of moral insight.

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But just here is where, it would seem, the rank and file of Christian people fail. And because they fail, it can be affirmed that the Church has lost its power "over minds that count." All that one has to do is to imagine what the immense influence of the Church would be if every one who calls himself a Christian were really capable of such independent thinking, to see where our failure lies. It is precisely because it often seems impossible to distinguish between the mind of the Church and the mind of the secular community that the Church has been called obsolescent, negligible, as a moral factor in the world in which we live. Unless the mind of the Christian can be more independent, more nonconformist, more capable of resisting and rising above conventional ideas and thus doing its own thinking and pointing to higher and finer things, it is useless to expect our Churches to possess any degree of moral leadership. They may swell their membership lists, put up costly edifices, increase their endowments—but they will not be an active constructive influence in shaping a better world and a truer form of human society. But that Jesus expected that his disciples would thus be a restless and generative influence in the world is plain. Precisely this is what he had in mind when he said: "Ye are the salt of the earth." Ye are a bit of penetrating leaven in the lump. In proportion as each Christian possesses this quality of saltiness, this virtue of yeastiness in his thinking and living, will the Church become a moral power in the world. It is a cause for lamentation that so often this capacity for independent thinking is found outside of organized Christianity, and that institutional religion

seems to be synonymous with conventional ideas, and to be the custodian, as it was in Jesus' day, of traditional custom. In what respect, one may ask, does average Church opinion differentiate itself from average popular opinion in politics, racial relations, or the great international problems of our time? Suppose the Apostolic injunction were heard and obeyed by all who profess and call themselves Christians: "Have in you the mind that was in Christ." How quickly the Church would take on a moral significance and exert a moral influence which now it seems to lack!

In the next place, the mind of Christ is distinguished by a high degree of moral courage. Christ was capable not only of independent thinking, but also of applying his ideas courageously to the problems of the hour. It was for this that he incurred first the hostility and then the implacable enmity of the defenders of the existing *status quo*. Then, he stood up in the synagogue at Nazareth and applied his broad and humanitarian ideas to the intense and selfish nationalism which was part of the conventional Judaism of his day. Thus, he completely ignored racial prejudices. He sat down at noonday and talked with a Samaritan woman. He excited the hostile comment of scribe and Pharisee by eating with publicans and sinners. He disregarded canon law by the use he made of Scripture and of the Sabbath day. He not only announced certain ideas as true and right, but he applied them with simplicity and sincerity to existing social and political and ecclesiastical customs, let the chips fall where they would. Independent thinking was a prelude

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to independent action. The mind of Christ not only arrived at certain ideas, but also put them to work.

To have the mind of Christ the Christian must possess the same degree of moral courage. The early New Testament Christians showed this in a marked degree. For them, Christianity was not "a decent formula wherewith to embellish the comfortable life." It was a summons, a cause, a clarion call to action. They were willing to witness for their beliefs; to be what the word "witness" means—martyrs—for what they believed. And the Christian mind in its essence and at its best has always had their characteristic—a glad willingness to stand for what one believes, to seek to make it prevail, in the face of hostile opinion.

Here, again, one touches on a weakness in contemporary Christianity, the secret of its failure to exercise the highest moral leadership. Too often, in a word, there is a passive mental acceptance of Christian ideas, but no passionate purpose to apply them and thus make them prevail. One professes one's faith in the Christian way of life—of brotherhood, of peaceableness, of love and good will and justice. But there is absent a rigid and determined motive to live these ideas out in actual practice. There is a striking absence of a militant morality in the thought and life of the Church.

A Christian who has the mind of Christ must be militant in the application of his Christian ideas. He must certainly be internationally-minded, for example; a Crusader for a world order which exorcises hatred, banishes war, and substitutes law for violence in adjusting its affairs.

There can be no question that the mind of Christ outlaws a selfish and egotistical and narrow nationalism, and declares for coöperation, brotherhood, and mutual service in international relations. The mind of Christ and the war system are utterly incompatible. A Christian who shares the mind of Christ must perforce be an internationally minded man. One may differ from another in method and policy. A Christian may not favor the League of Nations. But he must stand for brotherliness and sympathy between nations. It is hard to see how he can be an isolationist or opposed to any effort to share the burdens or to have part in the struggles of other people to attain stability and peace. Yet I have heard of "Churches" whose members were so incrustated in conventional forms of nationalism that they would not listen to sermons favoring a new and more Christian world order. Suppose that all Christians so called were active promoters of such a world order; should divest themselves of partisan political ideas, resist all appeals to fear, rise above the low level of contemporary opinion, defy the group-opinion and become free and ardent protagonists of high and noble international ideals—then how strong and convincing the moral leadership of the Church would be.

Or here is our economic and industrial life, so full of uneasiness, of inequalities, of injustice. No thinking man can readily believe that our present economic system can long endure on its present foundations. The mind of Christ, if brought to bear on the present organization of industry, will inevitably project the question: "Is the present economic system beneficent and permanent in the

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name of justice, economy, and the best and highest interests of mankind as a whole?" Yet it is precisely in the hands of professedly Christian people that the ordering of that system rests. Could any greater blessing befall mankind to-day than that the great leaders in our financial and industrial world should seek to have in them the mind of Christ and seek resolutely to re-form our affairs and bring them more nearly in accord with the principles of their religion? Does not the whole difficulty in our present situation rest here: that Christian men and women do no such thing? Is it true or false that Christian people "as a rule bring to their major business, professional, or even political occupations a cultivated bias in favor of things as they are"? But to have the mind of Christ is precisely not to have any "cultivated bias"; rather it is to have what has been called "the noblest, the rarest, the most difficult to admire of all human ambitions," an open mind, eagerly expectant of new discoveries, and devoted to the propagation of new ideas in any form of human association. What would it not mean for the welfare of the world to-day if these who wear the name of Christ had and employed the mind of Christ?

One more characteristic of the mind of Christ must be mentioned. It was distinguished by a deep and beautiful humility. This aspect of the mind of Christ was in the apostle's mind when he used the phrase. Two high-strung women in the Philippian Church were exhorted to be at peace with each other, by recovering the mind of Christ, who, though he was rich, made himself poor that we through his poverty might become rich. It is startling to



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discover that the fullest statement of the Incarnation to be found in the New Testament was made to compose the quarrels of two otherwise unknown, turbulent women who were disturbing the life of one of these early Christian communities. Yet the only way in which peace could be attained was as each of them had in her the mind of Christ, esteemed the other better than herself, and achieved the lowliness of Him who "did not lift up nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets."

The virtue of humility is not particularly congenial to the modern man. It is not an evident characteristic of the average American mind. Yet to its absence we can trace many, if not most, of our ills. What is the ultimate cause of our domestic unrest, of the upheavals and disintegration in family life, which constitutes one of our gravest problems? It is precisely the spirit of pride, of an exaggerated egotism, of self-assertion, the absence of consideration, of humility and good will. If people who call themselves Christians could achieve the humility of the mind of Christ, they would not think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, would not seek to avenge themselves, but would bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Only so shall we attain peace and stability in place of family discord and disruption.

And what is the cause of our national lawlessness which threatens the very fabric of government and disgraces our social order? It is the insistence of personal rights and personal liberty in entire disregard of the common welfare. One of the most eloquent letters of President

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Eliot, quoted in the biography of Henry James, was written in explanation of his position in favor of National Prohibition. This staunch defender of personal liberty found no inconsistency in such a position. Convinced of the social evil of alcoholism, he found that it was reasonable and right for the individual to waive his personal rights in favor of the common good—to deny oneself the right to drink if it caused his brother to offend. It was a simple exercise of the self-denying mind of Christ.

What is the cause of our racial conflicts and antagonisms? Is it not the swagger, the boastfulness, the assumption of the superiority of one race over another, the feeling of contempt of one race for another? We shall never compose our racial differences until we attain a measure of racial humility, of frank recognition of the virtues, the capacities of other peoples, a desire to profit from what they can do for us, as well as to share with them what we have to give. When one has in him the mind of Christ, he never uses derogatory epithets about any race or people, never draws hard and fast lines, and rises superior to what has been called the American caste system, as inhuman and deadly as the world has ever seen.

And how will Peace between nations be finally achieved? It was a great saying of Felix Adler that we shall never have universal Peace until we attain a degree of national humility. So long as our national consciousness is bump-tious and selfish and self-assertive—considering only its own rights, its own independence, and unwilling to sacrifice a shred of its sovereignty—so long Peace will remain a dream, unattainable by any methods or device or out-

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ward manipulation. Not until the mind of Christ, who, although he was rich, made himself poor that others through his voluntary humiliation might be made rich—not until such a mind has become the mind of this and every other nation will we have Peace upon earth to men of good will.

The mind of Christ! We end as we began: this is our greatest need. The preponderant majority of the American people are professedly Christian. The greatest obligation which rests upon them is to have in them the mind of Christ. If the people that are in our Churches to-day could possess the independence and the courage and the humility of the mind of Christ, then indeed his kingdom would come, his will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven.



XIII

*Religious Faith: Privilege or Problem?*

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HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

MINISTER, RIVERSIDE CHURCH

NEW YORK CITY

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK was born in 1878 at Buffalo, N. Y. He graduated from Colgate University with the A.B. degree. He received the M.A. degree and the B.D. degree from Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him by various universities.

He was ordained in the Baptist ministry. He has been pastor of the First Church, Montclair, N. J. He was the minister of the First Presbyterian Church, New York City, and has been the minister of the beautiful new Riverside Church since 1927. He built this church.

He is an annual preacher at colleges and universities. He is a trustee of Colgate University and Smith College.

Together with his other duties, he is the Professor of Practical Theology at Union Theological Seminary.

He is the author of many books, the best known being the trilogy on Prayer, Faith, and Service, *The Modern Use of the Bible*, *Adventurous Religion*, and *A Pilgrimage to Palestine*.

Dr. Fosdick preaches over the radio every Sunday afternoon. He is a prophet in this modern age.

## XIII

### RELIGIOUS FAITH: PRIVILEGE OR PROBLEM?

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

*The Lord is my strength and song.*

PSALM 118: 14.

WE could take our text almost at random from the book of Psalms. "The Lord is my strength and song." These words happen to come from the 118th Psalm, but they express a characteristic attitude of all genuine religion. We must recognize, however, that there are many people to-day deeply interested in religion, concerned about it and given to much thought upon it, who could not say that at all. What they would have to say would be very different: The Lord is my problem. How familiar that is! God is a problem; prayer is a problem; the Church is a problem; the Bible is a problem; immortality is a problem. Everything about religion has become a problem, difficult to solve, much worried over, and long discussed.

On one of our college campuses there has been held for years the annual Week of Prayer. This year they have changed the name. It now becomes the Annual Religious Forum, and with that charming candor which makes the younger generation famous, the editor of the college paper explains why. The editorial reads:

. . . The venerable institution formerly called the Week of Prayer has at last been relieved of the weight

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of a misnomer. . . . With the thoroughly modern sounding name, "Annual Religious Forum," we feel that it ought to enjoy a new lease of life. . . .

The word "forum" means a place where questions are thrown open to discussion. This word expresses perfectly the modern attitude toward religion. . . .

Instead of furnishing an inexhaustible well of peace, religion has become a source of harassed confusion. The painful attempt to work out religious problems for ourselves has taken the place of acquiescence of authority.

Well, there you have it. That is truth well put. There are few things more typical of our contemporary religious situation than that. For multitudes of people religion has ceased being their strength and song, and has become a matter of discussion and debate. The characteristic symbol of much modern religion has become the discussion group. Surely, a good deal of our religious dryness, our lack of spiritual spring and spontaneity, our dearth of joy and radiance goes back to that. Some generations are predominantly appreciative. They enjoy their religion. They make a festival of it. They create great music to celebrate it and build classic cathedrals to enshrine it. And some generations are predominantly critical. They ask questions, raise doubts, seek for reasons, analyze their faith. The first kind of generation instinctively cries, "The Lord is my strength and song," but the second finds the Lord a very difficult problem indeed.

There is, I take it, no doubt as to which kind of generation we are living in. One hears it commonly said to-day that there never was a time when there was more interest in religion than now. That may be so. At a typical



midnight session on a college campus one may be fairly sure that two subjects will be discussed: love and religion—but, mark it! it is religion as a matter of debate; it is religion being botanized, its stamens and pistils being classified and tabulated; it is not religion as a matter of joyful confidence and song.

Let us face frankly the disabilities of this situation, for, with all the advantages of it, a generation where the symbol of religion has become a discussion group has its disabilities. So we recall the familiar whimsy:

“A centipede was happy quite,  
Until a frog in fun  
Said, ‘Pray, which leg comes after which?’  
This raised her mind to such a pitch,  
She lay distracted in the ditch,  
Considering how to run.”

Multitudes of religious people are precisely in the same case with that centipede. Once their religion was spontaneous. They took it for granted; they depended on it and lived by it. But now, with many questions raised concerning it, it has become a problem, and they lie distracted in the ditch.

To all of this I can imagine some one saying: But religion is a problem, and nothing that anyone can say will stop its being that. Here on the one side we have an inherited faith, with imaginations of God and his relation to the universe at large and us within it formulated in pre-scientific ages, before men dreamed that the earth went about the sun; and on the other side all this new knowledge from Galileo to Einstein. Religion is a problem.

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What do you think of God? How do you imagine him? What do you make of prayer? How do you justify the idea that God is good in the presence of the miseries of men? How can you argue for the ultimate sacredness of personality, and how do you picture immortality? It is a problem. You may not like it that religion has ceased being for so many people a singing confidence by which they gladly live and has become a matter of debate, but it is a problem, and no wishing will stop its being that.

To which I answer: Very well, it is all that to me. Once it was not. In my adolescent youth I took religion for granted, without question, and then one year in a storm the questions came. Since then religion has been a problem. It will be till I die. My life's vocation is to face religious problems. If I had a thousand lives, I would use every one of them for that. I have no use for an uncritical religion that is afraid of questions. But, for all that, I refuse to lie distracted in the ditch.

Consider. Nature is a problem too. Ask the scientists and see—abyss after abyss of problems unsolved and questions unanswered there. If you approach it from that one angle, move up to it by that one road, concentrate your thought on that one aspect of it, Nature can loom as a gigantic problem. That, however, is not the whole story. Nature is my strength and song. I love her. I love her mountains and her seas, her quiet moods and the grandeur of her storms. In winter time, amid the cañons of these city streets, I comfort my soul with memories of her trees. I hunger for the lakes where the trout rise, and for the dash of her sea spray on windy

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days. If, now, you say, You have no right so naïvely to enjoy nature when nature has become a tremendous problem with thousands of unanswered questions there, I say, Starve your own soul if you will, but not mine.

“ . . . How oft—

In darkness and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—  
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,  
How often has my spirit turned to thee!”

Problem or no problem, nature is my strength and song.

Or, again, the family is a problem too. Indeed it is. If religion has gotten over into the discussion-group class, what will one say about the family? Read some books about it, listen to some speeches on it, and one would suppose that the family was that alone. No theory as to family life is unquestioned and no practice is beyond doubt. That, however, is not the whole story. There are some of us yet to whom the family is our strength and our song.

We of the older generation well remember Prof. John Fiske of Harvard. Once he wrote a letter to his wife describing a visit with Herbert Spencer, the philosopher. He was being entertained in Mr. Spencer's English home, and when Mr. Spencer asked him about his family he showed him a picture of his wife and children. That night he wrote his wife about it: “I showed Spencer the little picture of our picnic-wagon with the children inside. When I realized how lonely he must be without any wife

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and babies of his own, and how solitary he is in all his greatness, I had to pity him. Then as I watched him studying that picture and gazing at our children's faces I said to myself, "That wagonload of youngsters is worth more than all the philosophy ever concocted, from Aristotle to Spencer inclusive!" "

So be it! If, now, one says, But you have no right so naïvely to enjoy the family when everybody knows that the family in modern thought has become a problem, I say, Starve your own soul if you will, but not mine. To some of us yet the home is the loveliest relationship on earth, our strength and joy.

To-day we are claiming that exactly that same thing is true about religion. Every area of life is made up of two aspects, problem and privilege. If a man tries to monopolize the privilege alone and forget the problem, he becomes a sentimentalist. Granted that! That is a familiar emphasis to-day. But if a man becomes so obsessed with problems, holds them so closely to his eye that he can see nothing else, he becomes dry, sophisticated, unhappy, uncreative, futile. And particularly in religion he ceases having strength and song and has only a debate.

Consider, for example, the central matter of religion—God. Say that very word to some people to-day, and their instinctive response is a puzzled awareness of difficulty. There have been generations when the thought of God brought back a singing answer:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!  
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory."

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But to-day try the psychological test on many a casual Christian, saying, "God," and see what a stream of questions you start. Is there really a God? What is he like? How do you imagine him? How can you justify his ways with men? What a problem he is! Well, of course, he is a problem. Here we are with our little minds developing for a few millennia upon this midget planet in an immeasurable cosmos. Do we expect that with our butterfly nets we can capture the sun at noon, that we expect with our wits to capture the blazing truth about the Power that made all things? The idea of God is the most august that ever allured the imagination of man. That is no reason, however, why we should lie distracted in the ditch. After all, what we are driving at when we think of God is not obscure. It can be clearly put.

There are two sides to us, the physical and the spiritual. There are two sets of faculties, not far off but here in us, the world of matter and the world of spiritual values—on the one side things that we can see, touch, weigh, and measure; on the other side, the invisible, the intangible, the love of goodness, truth, and beauty. On the one side is what we call body, on the other side what we call soul. When, now, we say that we believe in God we mean that never can we adequately interpret the Power that made us in terms of the physical alone, that the spiritual life came from Spiritual Life, and that by the road that starts in us as spirit we must send our thought out toward God.

If that is true, we do not need to solve all the problems about God before we begin to enjoy him. Spiritual life

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is here. Here is where we first meet it and most practically deal with it—not far off, that we must climb the steepes to bring it down, but here. Whatever goodness, truth, beauty, love are, there is the Life Divine; there we most intimately know it and most practically handle it. There is the near end of God. And that Life Divine, loved and served, can be our strength and song.

How many problems there are about this envelope of atmosphere encompassing our globe! Men send up balloons and airplanes yet to find answers to unanswered questions about its extent, its density, its quality. Man, however, does not need to solve all the problems about the atmosphere before he begins to enjoy the air. That is here. We can breathe it, love it, live by it. There are times when man ought to puzzle his mind about the problems of the atmosphere, but there are other times when a man does well to say, Give me this northwest wind that blows the fog away; I love it.

Unless a man is a downright, dogmatic atheist, he can have that same kind of experience with God. We do not need to solve all the problems about God before we can begin to be enriched by him. As one listens to this contemporary debate one longs to speak one's mind. Discuss God, one would say; he is well worth discussing, and there are depths beyond depths there that the longest plummets of your debate will never reach; but for your soul's sake enjoy him, depend on him, live by him, be true to him. When you say "God" you mean spiritual life projected to the very center of the universe. But that spiritual life which you are projecting to the center of the universe is

also here. Here is where you start with it. Wherever goodness shines or love and beauty sing, there is the near end of God. Love him here; be true to him; be enriched by him.

One feels sure that some people present are in this line of fire. They are excessively problem-conscious. It is a familiar type of modern pathology. For there is nothing that cannot be reduced to a problem. English literature can, and some of us have seen it done. There are problems historical about Shakespeare's plays, problems biographical about his life, problems concerning the derivation of his plots, problems of scansion and prosody, of diction and vocabulary. How Shakespeare can be reduced to a problem, and how some of us have seen it done in the classroom until we wanted to cry, Just for an hour, just for an hour let us declare a moratorium on problems and enjoy him!

"Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:  
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,  
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;  
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:  
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale."

To be sure, there are literary problems about Romeo and Juliet, but, after all, Romeo and Juliet are among the loveliest lovers in the world. Once in a while at least, enjoy them. To be so obsessed with problems about Shakespeare that you lose Shakespeare—that is a pity. But there are multitudes to-day who so lose God.

There must be lives here that will bear witness to the need of this emphasis. You have problems about Christ.

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Well, of course you do, problems about the ancient documents where his life was recorded, about the stories of his birth, the miracles attributed to him, the prescientific world-views he shared with his generation, the early Church's theological interpretations of him—endless problems. And such is the capacity of the human mind to be obsessed with problems, even when dealing with something singularly beautiful, that there are many people to-day who never get any nearer to Christ than that. He is a problem.

That is not simply a pity; that deserves to be called stupid. To be sure, to neglect the problems as though they were not there, so that, credulously uncritical, one writes a life of Christ such as Papini did, that is stupid too, sentimentally stupid. But, after all, my friends, the most significant thing that ever happens on this planet is the coming of great personality. In science or art or religion that is true. The whole world steps forward when great personality arrives. He breaks like a tremendous wave through the sand bars that have barricaded us until all we lesser waves can flow in after him.

So came Christ to the world. Do we really mean that in his teachings of the good life, that go before us yet like a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, we can see nothing but problems? In that luminous personality that incarnated them and made those teachings beautiful, so that across the centuries men like George Matheson have said, "Son of Man, whenever I doubt of life, I think of Thee," and men like George Tyrrell have said, "Again and again I have been tempted to give up the struggle, but



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always the figure of that Strange Man hanging on the cross sends me back to my task again," do you see nothing but problems?

That is being pathologically problem-conscious. That is like taking a Beethoven sonata and seeing there nothing but a puzzle of date, composition, documentation, rendition, until that one thing is forgotten which is most worth remembering, that a Beethoven sonata is very beautiful and can enrich the spirit. This is one reason why we built a church like this in a community which so continually discusses religion. In that particular, this is one reason why Sunday afternoons we have a service where we do not talk about religion but sing it. One of you said to me the other day, "That afternoon ministry of music almost saves my life, for I discuss religion all the week, and I need something to encourage me to love it."

Be sure of this: anybody who finds in religion nothing but discussion never commends it to anybody. In any realm, be it science or art or religion, nobody commends anything to anybody unless he first enjoys it, glories in it, depends on it, and is enriched by it. Wanted, therefore, Christians fearless and honest, to be sure, in facing problems, but so deeply enriched by their religion, so practically living it, that they commend it as a subject well deserving to be discussed!

You have problems about prayer. Of course you have, endless problems. Be honest with them. But, I beg of you, find some way of praying that is real to you. Do not let prayer stay merely a puzzle. A friend once said to me, "I do not pray the way you do." "Well," I said,

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"how do you pray?" And he answered, "On the piano." I have heard him doing it, improvising. From the too hectic fret of modern business he turned at times to another spiritual technique, opened himself, became responsive, and talked with the Divine in a language that steadied and enriched him. If you cannot pray as you would, then pray as you can; but do not leave that great realm involved in prayer and worship merely a problem.

Or you have problems about the Bible. I hold a chair in a theological seminary on that subject, so that when you have told all the problems about the Scripture that puzzle you, I ought to be able to go on and tell you others still; but that is no reason for lying distracted in the ditch. In this Book are passages that poured up out of the souls of men in hours of insight and that have been remembered all these centuries because deep calleth unto deep still at the noise of their waterfalls. If you cannot understand all the Bible, make something worth while out of that much of it you can understand, but do not leave the greatest religious literature of mankind a mere problem.

This reduction of religion to a problem has become so familiar that some people to-day are using it as a defense mechanism. They hide behind it. They push their problems to the front, like old savages that have been known to fight behind their women and children. Faced by the rich opportunities or the urgent duties of the Christian life, they erect an interrogation point and hide behind it. They have discovered that Christianity is easier to discuss

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than to live, and they are dodging the living of it behind the discussion of it. How much of that there is to-day!

I know well that I am dealing honestly with some one's conscience here when I say, Get out from behind that interrogation point. That is no place for a man to hide. Whatever problems there may be, there is positive and practical Christian living that you could undertake if you really wanted to.

As for some of you—and there are multitudes of you in the world to-day—whose religion quite honestly has gotten over into the discussion-group class, remember that the deepest and loveliest experiences of life are never reached by discussion only. Discuss love; read all the books about it; inform yourself about every modern theory concerning it; hold your campus sessions on it; debate its history, physiology, psychology, codes, and laws; but, however far you push your discussions of love, you will not reach love by that alone. Love is an adventure of the whole personality. One comes to understand it, not so much by discussing it as by giving oneself to it.

So is religion. Real religion, like real love, lies not at the end of a discussion, but at the end of the soul's adventure.

You are right—how many problems there are in religion! How much we wish we did have answers to some of our questions! Here in this church we would like to help you find them. We will set up all the discussion groups we can, for this church stands for an opportunity for the free discussion of religion. But if some of us are

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going to get to the heart of the matter, we must go deeper. We will have to take our souls in hand and say, O my soul, religion is like nature or music or the family, full of problems but with something deeper there—life, life that is life indeed, our strength and song!

XIV

*Running Away from Life*

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ALBERT WENTWORTH PALMER

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ALBERT WENTWORTH PALMER was born in 1879 at Kansas City, Mo. He graduated from the University of California with the B.L. degree. He received the B.D. degree from Yale University and the Doctor of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion.

He was ordained in the Congregational ministry. He was pastor of Plymouth Church, Oakland, Calif.; of the Central Union Church, Honolulu; and of First Church, Oak Park, Ill.

He is now president of the Chicago Theological Seminary.

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He is one of the regular Bible teachers at the Chicago Evening Club in Orchestra Hall. He is a regular preacher at the colleges and universities.

He is the author of *The Drift Toward Religion*, *The New Christian Epic*, and *Whither Christianity?*

## XIV

### RUNNING AWAY FROM LIFE

ALBERT W. PALMER

*Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the  
presence of the Lord.*

JONAH 1: 3.

*If I take the wings of the morning and dwell  
in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there  
shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall  
hold me.*

PSALM 139: 9.

EVER since the days of Jonah men have tried to run away from life, and have found that it can't be done. And ever since the days of the Psalmist spiritually-minded men have learned that life, wherever lived, is not apart from the care and help of God. The prodigal son does not always come home to find the Father's house. Sometimes, even in the far country, he lifts up his eyes from feeding the swine and finds his Father there.

The most extreme and dramatic way of running away from life is by committing suicide. Far be it from me, as a minister who has shared the intimate sorrows of many families, to speak harshly of those who have chosen this door of exit from a life of trouble. Suicide, like divorce, needs to be understood rather than denounced. It is a tragic revelation of a troubled and discordant mind even as divorce is of an unloving home. Back of both these tragedies lie deeper problems—how to create a joyous home and how to insure a unified and harmonious soul.

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Sometimes suicide comes because of physical breakdown—a wholesome outdoor life might have forestalled it. Sometimes, of course, it comes from entire mental irresponsibility. Again it may be due to the overwhelming of balanced judgment by a sudden mental crisis which the victim attempted to bear alone—when a few words of counsel from a friend would have shown a way out. No wonder a Salvation Army barracks in a desperate slum once put up this notice: “Before committing suicide please consult the adjutant!” If people whose mental burdens seem overwhelming would just consult somebody—the minister or the policeman or even the elevator boy—they would find that no situation is so bad but that there is some honorable way out, and strength from God to take that way.

Two California poets have presented this problem from contrasting points of view. George Sterling, who died by his own hand recently, left behind a poem entitled “My Swan Song.”

“Has man the right  
To die and disappear,  
When he has lost the fight?  
To sever without fear  
The irksome bonds of life,  
When he is tired of strife?  
May he not seek, if it seems best,  
Relief from grief? May he not rest  
From labors vain, from hopeless task?  
—I do not know; I merely ask.

Or must he carry on  
The struggle, till it's done?  
Will he be damned, if he,  
World-weary, tired, and ill,



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Deprived of strength and will,  
Decides he must be free?  
Is punishment awaiting those,  
Who quit, before the whistle blows,  
Who leave behind unfinished tasks?  
I do not know; I merely ask."

But years ago Edwin Markham had anticipated and answered this question by these lines:

"Toil-worn and trusting Zeno's mad belief,  
A soul went wailing from this world of grief,  
A wild hope led the way—  
Then, suddenly, dismay!  
Lo! the old load was there!  
The duty, the despair!  
Nothing had changed—still only one escape  
From its old self into the angel shape."<sup>1</sup>

To rush from this life into another one only postpones the issues, and it is always hardest on those left behind. The nobler philosophy is that which says:

"Be strong! We are not here to drift,  
We have hard work to do and loads to lift;  
Shun not the struggle, face it, 'tis God's gift—  
Be strong!"

The newspapers seem to indicate a recent epidemic of suicides. I say "seems," for one learns to distrust newspapers as accurate gauges of reality. They play up what they are interested in or what they arbitrarily consider news, so that one can never be sure just how much their report of current life has been colored by conscious or unconscious propaganda. Possibly a scientific study would reveal no sudden change in the number that for various reasons take their own lives.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by Edwin Markham. Used by permission.

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And yet it must be admitted that there is much in the current philosophy of life to promote rather than prevent a policy of self-destruction. The college student to-day, for example, meets much that is unsettling. Some of his teachers seem to have no very clear-cut standards of right and wrong, beyond a feeling that some actions are not "nice" or "pretty." A mechanistic interpretation of the universe seems to leave out the spiritual values of life as a mere unimportant by-product to be either ignored or apologized for. Mechanistic psychology knows no soul and is hardly conscious of consciousness, let alone of any hope of immortality. There are no bugle calls to heroic action in the dawn of life sounded by this materialistic subpersonal philosophy. It would not be surprising if youth cried out to such a life when—

"Fear and faith alike are flown;  
Lonely I come, and I depart alone  
And know it not where nor unto whom I go;  
But that thou canst not follow me I know."

The New Haven *Journal-Courier* has wisely said:

Nineteen is a stressful age for a fine-lined boy. Part boy, part man, he trails the glories of the mystic past. A boy sees visions, as even old men remember. His clouds are very pink, but they may be very black. Apparently keen for his new status, he yet lets go his irresponsible innocence sorrowfully, and, as compensation for their loss, hugs the fragments of his dreams. On his soul pound the beatings of varied emotions. Within him are stirrings for a career, worthy, splendid, as in the hero books he so lately read in which sacrifice was play and joy, provided only the race be run in the

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open, within sight of the beauty and free gracious liberty echoed from mountain to sea, transfiguring the faces of friends and written in heroism and truth and fidelity!

How to accord all this with the sordid, the ugly, the cynical, the impure, the blazoning of show for substance, in the world their elders have set up for them, is the problem of these desperate boys whose tragedies shock parents, teachers, citizens. The vision is obscured for a time, though the world is so unutterably beautiful; kindness and love are so infinite, with men and women on every side eager to join in making the world a paradise.

The need is for faith, for some anchorage of affection until the furious tides of emotion recede, and the depressing sense of contrast lessens, and these boy-men look out on God's world in their right mind once more, serene and unafraid.

It is significant that one of our youngest poets, Edna St. Vincent Millay, has faced this problem and suggested how such a troubled soul, coming to the Father's house through suicide's dark rusty door, came at last to God and said:

"Father, I beg of thee a little task  
To dignify my days. . . .  
'Child,' my father's voice replied,  
'All things thy fancy hath desired of me  
Thou hast received. I have prepared for thee  
Within my house a spacious chamber, where  
Are delicate things to handle and to wear,  
And all these things are thine. Dost thou love song?  
My minstrels shall attend thee all day long.  
Or sigh for flowers? My fairest gardens stand  
Open as fields to thee on every hand.

## RUNNING AWAY FROM LIFE

And all thy days this word shall hold the same;  
No pleasure shalt thou lack that thou shalt name.  
But as for tasks—he smiled, and shook his head.  
“Thou hadst thy task, and laidst it by,” he said.”<sup>1</sup>

Back of such a poem lies the faith that there is something more to life than mechanistic impersonal behavior—that life is a task with value and with meaning.

If youth fails to gather such an interpretation of life and feels wearied and disgusted to be merely a cog in a great world machine, let the Church share with the college its due part of the blame. For while the classroom has seemed to teach a mere barren mechanicalism, the Church has too often made its message deal with issues long outgrown and phrased in terms meaningless or powerless to modern youth. A conception of God and a philosophy of life which can use and translate or, when necessary, effectively challenge the scientific thought-forms of our age is what the age demands. A religion which accepts science as far as it goes and then goes on to insist upon the supreme importance of the further realities of moral idealism, beauty, love, and personal devotion, is what youth needs. It is for the Church to set up banners in the dawn, to call attention to the spiritual values in life, what Canon Streeter calls the quality of life after science has reported all it can on things, which, after all, have to do only with quantity. Youth will not run away from a life filled with spiritual mean-

<sup>1</sup> From *Renascence and Other Poems*, published by Harper and Brothers. Copyright, 1917, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

ing, life which contains real tasks not to be lightly laid aside.

But there are other ways of running away from life. In this cushioned and upholstered age we try to run away from physical hardship and exertion. So many things are done for us that it seems quite delightful until we find that we are losing our teeth and our health for lack of hard work! And so we go back to our gymnasiums and masseurs and, more pleasantly, to long outdoor camping expositions because, after all, we cannot run away from life in its elemental demand of facing hardship and physical exertion.

Or we run away from family responsibility. In these days of carefully balanced budgets and birth control, of alluring shop windows and definite salaries, it costs so much in self-denial to share with children what might go into Oriental rugs and pictures and automobiles and trips to Europe. But in the end, when children grow up in the home and open windows on larger landscapes, when they bring home the living, growing world in which they move, and so enrich life in ways intensely real and personal, there comes to each such enlarged family circle a distinct reward for not having evaded life. It wasn't easy to be tied to a baby once, or to several babies, but it is an enriching experience when those babies, grown and educated, bring back into the homes in turn their babies, their experiences, their vivid reports on the great pageant of living.

Political and social responsibilities are similarly unescapable. You are too busy to run for office? You really

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must get off the grand jury? You can't be expected to take part in politics, not even in your own precinct club? You are not even to be depended on to vote? Well and good. But listen! When disease runs riot in the slum district because of the corrupt inefficiency which has flourished in some Board of Health because of your indifference, and that disease spreads to your pleasant suburb—what then? Here is a criminal bred by the corrupt politics and unspeakable jail and criminal court conditions which you did nothing to prevent—when that criminal meets you in some dark shadow and shoots you down or someone dear to you, perhaps the question will arise whether we can ever successfully run away from our civic responsibilities.

People all about us are trying to ignore their moral responsibilities and pass them by. "We won't count this one," they say with Rip Van Winkle to each daring sin. But just when they think they are "beyond good and evil" the tether of the moral law brings them up with a sharp jerk.

"I said 'Good-by' to my conscience,  
'Good-by, forever and aye';  
And conscience forthwith departed  
And returned not from that day.

I said 'Return' to my conscience,  
'For I long to see thy face';  
But conscience replied, 'I cannot—  
Remorse sits in my place!'"

So, if there were time, I might point out it is with religion also. It seems easy to run away from religion. We

are too busy, too practical to bother. It seems rather troublesome with its fussy details of church attendance, Bible reading, prayer, grace before meat, Sabbath observance, Sunday schools, and all the rest. Why not chuck it overboard and get on very well without it? And then, just as we seem to have banished it successfully, a sunset making the western sky all glorious, or the birth of a child and a bit of helpless humanity in our arms, or a death and the strange peace on a countenance well loved and forever still, breaks in upon our complacency and tells us that religion can never be evaded.

Let me call your attention to the greatness of Jesus in that he never ran away from life! He heard the summons of John the Baptist and answered it by his self-dedication at the Jordan—"Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It is the first utterance of his active ministry, and what a bugle call to face life through! And so he goes on. In the wilderness, at the well curb in Samaria, with the hungry multitude, in the streets of Jericho, on the steep relentless road up to Jerusalem, amid the money changers, before Pilate, on Calvary's hill he evaded nothing—he never ran away from life. Matthew Arnold said of Sophocles: "He saw life steadily and saw it whole." But of Jesus may be written also: "He faced all life unflinching and saw it through."





XV

*Keeping Life Fresh*

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RALPH WASHINGTON SOCKMAN

MINISTER, CHRIST METHODIST CHURCH  
NEW YORK CITY

RALPH WASHINGTON SOCKMAN was born in 1889 at Mount Vernon, Ohio. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan with the degree of B.A. He received the M.A. degree from Columbia University and is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary. He received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Columbia University. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him.

He was ordained in the Methodist ministry and has had only one church, the Madison Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church. The name of this church has been changed to Christ Church, since the erection of a handsome new building at the cost of millions of dollars.

During the war he was with the Army Y. M. C. A.

He is a regular preacher at various colleges and universities. He broadcasts for the National Sunday Forum during the summer months.

He is the author of *The Suburbs of Christianity*, *Men of the Mysteries*, and *Morals of To-Morrow*.

## XV

### *KEEPING LIFE FRESH*

RALPH W. SOCKMAN

THE twenty-third Psalm and the tenth chapter of John are antiphonal. Out of the valley of the shadow of death the Psalmist called, "The Lord is my shepherd," and back from the sunny hillside of the Gospel comes the answer of Jesus, "I am the good shepherd." In the ninth verse of this tenth chapter our Master makes a significant statement: "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture."

To get the force of this figure one must think of the scene Christ frequently beheld. He saw sheep at nightfall huddled together waiting for the door to open into the sheepfold. He saw the same sheep in the morning chafing and eager to go out to the openness of the pasture. The alternation of their need struck Jesus as typical of men. Just as the growth of the sheep requires their going in and going out of the sheepfold, so the growth of the human spirit demands a going in and going out of the divine sheepfold through the Christ door. "He shall go in and go out."

The Master himself illustrates the meaning of his counsel, although he does not mention it in connection with this passage. Jesus tells of a young man who went out from

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his father's house in the impetuosity of his youth. He wanted to see life. He would roam the "great white ways" of the world. The shelter of his father's home seemed like a barrier shutting him from the enjoyments of life. He called for his share of the estate and went into a far country. Throwing off his old family restraints, he revelled for a time in his new found freedom. Soon his patrimony was exhausted. His liberty was leveled down into the bondage of sin. Lifting up his "lean and hungry look" from the husks which lay scattered about his bestial existence, he beheld with clarity of vision his father's house with its peace and plenty. He said, "I will arise and go to my father." He arose. And as we look with Christ we see the prodigal son picking his way across the barren stretches of the far country, his eyes downcast, in sheepish dejection and humiliation. The disillusioned and exposed son needs a door *in*.

But there was another son in that paternal home—an elder brother. He had never scampered off in riotous self-indulgence. He had never abandoned his father. He had been a dutiful son, but his relation to his father and his outlook on life were governed by a sense of duty rather than by a glad spontaneity. Therefore, he did not rejoice with his father at the return of his brother, but moped at the thought that he himself had been cheated because all his years of service had apparently earned for him no greater reward than his brother's. The elder son was a penned-up, cramped, calculating creature with his eye on the restrictions and the rewards of life. What he needed was a door *out*. Do not misunderstand me. I am

not joining that chorus of interpretation which sings the praises of the prodigal son at the expense of his pains-taking brother. It is a mistaken but modern popular idea that the prodigal view of the far country is necessary to the enjoyment of life. What the elder son needed was a door out, not to the sin of the far country, but a door out of the little sheepfold of cautious security and cloistered sympathy to the pasture land of the free-born sons of God, where men feed their minds on fresh ideas, lift up their eyes unto larger visions, and grow into bigness of soul.

It is a blessed reality that when the prodigal returns shorn and shattered, Christ is the door that can let him into the comfort of the divine household. It is also a blessed thing that for short-sighted, narrow-minded, small-souled elder brothers, Christ has often been the door *out* to world-views and large living. But neither the prodigal nor the elder brother is an ideal figure. The ideal child of God is the one that habituates himself to the regular and proper use of the Christ-door, to the going *in and out*.

When we translate this text into the prose concreteness of everyday life, what does it involve?

First we learn the principle of alternation between the going *in* to the shelter of the Christian faith and *out* to the exposure of it.

The healthy Christian must know the shelter of his religion. Consider a phase or two of that shelter. It is a protection against the anxieties of life. When we say that, we must not make the mistake very common in certain religious circles to-day. The late Joseph Pulitzer in

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his closing years had a mania for silence and built for himself in the heart of New York "a tower of silence," where with three thicknesses of walls and of doors he sought to shut out every sound. So some modern religious cults make of their faith a sort of "tower of silence" in which they hear no cries of suffering, no calls for help. We must not copy that error. We must keep our ears open to the cry of need from every corner of the earth.

As a Christian I must have a front door opening on the world; but as that great servant of humanity, Walter Rauschenbusch, could say, so must I be able to say:

"In the castle of my soul  
Is a little postern gate,  
Whereat, when I enter,  
I am in the presence of God."

That little "postern gate" is a door in to a very real shelter from anxiety, but also from our sins. Here again we must not repeat a very vulgar mistake. The doctrine of divine forgiveness has been misinterpreted by many to mean that they can run ruthlessly over the rights of others and then dash back into the castled safety of a forgiving God, whither the punishment of their sins cannot pursue them. God's pardon has been emphasized as a sort of portcullis to be dropped in the face of a chasing devil. It is not from the consequences of our sins that we should stress the protection but from the sins themselves. And this is what the Christ door offers. Ask my friend who a few years ago was ordered out of the city of Minneapolis as a derelict and who to-day is the head of our Hadley Rescue Hall on the Bowery. That manly Irishman will

not be ashamed to tell you that Christ has been a shelter from harassing temptation and assaulting appetite.

Through the Christ-door we can go in to a place of respite from the buffeting and exposure of our complex gusty world. The hardest mariner at times longs for the harbor. The strongest of us has a normal desire for shelter. The fact that such hymns as "Rock of Ages" and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" have proven among the most popular hymns of the English-speaking world is evidence of this natural longing for a door in to the divine shelter.

But the current religious interest cannot healthily flow always inward. "He shall go in and go out." The wise shepherd knows that if sheep are to develop form and muscle, they must go out and find pasture. Hence Christ sends his wards out.

He would have them go further in life's ventures than does the non-Christian. Who is it that starts the great social crusades for the abolishing of such sins as intemperance and war? Who is it that goes out beyond the paved roads of conventional morality to wrestle with the problems at which the "man on the street" only winks? Whence come the reforms, the health movements, the daring social experiments of "turning the other cheek" and "going the second mile"? The answer should be, the flock of Christ. Not always, to be sure, has the Church as an organization gone out to the great risks of social progressive experiments. Not infrequently the leadership in social crises is taken by courageous souls outside the Church. But it is from those influenced by the Church

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that the general support of public betterment has largely come.

Is the Christian Church sneered at as a shelter for souls? A shelter, yes, but the kind of one that a stockade is on the frontiers of civilization into which the pioneers of the cross come to restore their tired spirits and to reload the outposts of the Kingdom of God. God a refuge? Yes. "But God is our refuge and *strength*." And it is this alternation between God, the refuge, and God the strength, between religion, the shelter, and religion, the "desperate sortie," between "going into the silence" and going out into action—it is this which keeps spiritual life healthy and balanced.

Secondly, the Christian must alternate between "going in" to the restraints of his religion and "going out" to the liberties of it. One of our great leaders of youth says that he is often asked by parents as to the safety of certain colleges for their sons. The question, he says, calls to his mind an orphan boy who was reared by an uncle. When the time arrived for the lad to go to college, the uncle laid his hands on his shoulders and said, "David, do what you have a mind to do." The guardian had given so much painstaking care to the boy's development that he knew the youth in making up his mind would take into account the large and wise considerations and be guided by the right principles. For such a boy almost any college is safe.

As I rub my mind over this tenth chapter of John, I seem to feel that Jesus is such a guardian. He says, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."



## RALPH WASHINGTON SOCKMAN

He came to show men the *green* pastures of the soul. He wants to give men the latchkey of liberty that they may "go out" under their own free will. But he would give the liberty to men only after they have learned discipline through "going in" to the restraints of life.

That freedom follows discipline is a true principle in any sphere. The free and smooth government of a home cannot begin in unrestrained license. The nursery is hardly the place to put in practice the Wilsonian doctrine of pure democracy whereby the rights of small bodies to govern themselves shall be preserved inviolate. Neither should family constitutions be too easily amended by the youngest constituents. If we wish freedom in the home, there must be a preliminary discipline. If I wish the freedom of the artist whereby my hands can dance with automatic grace over the keyboard while my mind dreams the themes of the composer, I must first shut myself in to the restrictions of the finger-exercise periods. If I wish that liberty of the established business man which will enable me to travel at will in my maturity, I must "go in" to rigorous application in my earlier years.

So Christ, in this nursery and art and business which is called life, says his follower shall "go in" to the discipline before he shall "go out" to the freedom. And the Master lays down a strict regimen for us. "Narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth unto life." When we go in to his training quarters we have to discipline our eyes, our thoughts, our emotions. But when we have so schooled ourselves, we can go out into the midst of this

tempting world with "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Ours is an undisciplined age. Finding ourselves in a chaos of self-expression bordering on libertinism, many are calling for censorship of press and stage and public morals generally. Censorship is at best only an expedient, and one which has often been abused. Perhaps we need it temporarily, but we should be far more concerned in restoring the discipline given by the Christian Church and Christian home. Censors cannot do what parents leave undone; legislatures cannot correct the wildness which the Churches fail to tame.

A third aspect of this alternation needs to be emphasized. The Christian shall "go in" to the close-up views of the sheepfold and shall "go out" to the long vistas of the pasture. The intimate and personal aspects of religion must alternate with the general and social.

The late Dr. John Henry Jowett in his characteristically beautiful fashion likened the mind of Paul to the movement of the skylark. Paul soared to heights of comprehensive vision when he beheld all Europe as his parish. As an "ethereal minstrel pilgrim of the sky," he "songfully surveyed the redemption of the world." But the Apostle's mind kept returning to its nest upon the ground. He did not lose himself in the world-wide generalizations. The skylark comes down to warm its body on the bosom of the earth. So Paul nested close to his Lord. Thus he kept his experiences warmly personal. "He loved *me* and gave himself for *me*." "He called *me*." These are the glad crooning songs of the nest.

## RALPH WASHINGTON SOCKMAN

Every healthy-minded Christian must have, as Paul, such a skylark motion in his religion. Some Churchmen keep too close to the nest. Their religion is provincially intimate, morbidly individualistic. They need to swing out to catch world-views. On the other hand many in modern times need to come in from a merely general public interest in religion to a close-up personal intimacy with the living Christ. Religion to-day is a public question as never before. It figures in our conversations. All intelligent people express some interest in religious questions, for they are topics of the times. It is one thing, however, to read what some prominent preacher says about the birth of Christ on the front page of a newspaper and quite another thing to hear the living Christ knocking at the front door of your heart. We shall never redeem men by vague general interest in religion. We come to vital grips with our religious beliefs only when we "go in" with them to the intimacy of the personal and the possessive.

Our imaginations are captured by the thought of going out with Christ's gospel and ideals to transform the large areas of social living.

"Christ for the world we sing,  
The world to Christ we bring."

But we must remind ourselves whence came the initial impulse of this outgoing crusade. We must recall the upper room in which the risen Christ made himself so vividly present that even the skeptical Thomas, in a burst of illumined conviction, exclaimed, "*My* Lord and *my* God." As it was begun, so will the great social redemptive work

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be sustained. The Christian must follow Christ *in* to the intimacies of the "My" if he is to follow him *out* to his public social programs.

"I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, *and he shall go in and go out.*"

XVI

*A Good Word for Jacob*

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FRANCIS JOHN McCONNELL

BISHOP, METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
NEW YORK AREA

FRANCIS JOHN McCONNELL was born in 1871 at Trinway, Ohio. He graduated from Ohio Wesleyan College with the A.B. degree. He received the S.T.B. degree and the Ph.D. degree from Boston University. The honorary degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him.

He was ordained in the Methodist ministry. He has been pastor at Chelmsford, Mass., Harvard Street, Cambridge, and Brooklyn, N. Y. He was president of De Pauw University.

He was made Bishop in 1912. He is now president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

He is a great prophet of the Gospel of Jesus.

He is the author of many books, the best known of which are *The Diviner Immanence*, *The Increase of Faith*, *Personal Christianity*, *Is God Limited*, and *The Christlike God*.

## XVI

### *A GOOD WORD FOR JACOB*

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

It seems always in order to a certain type of cynic to disparage the Scriptures, and especially the Old Testament, because of the moral shortcomings of some of the heroes. Jacob in particular is often treated—indeed has been quite recently treated—as if his experience at Bethel—where in a dream he saw the angels descending and ascending—was merely the “rationalization” of a bargainer’s instinct; and as if his experience at the brookside where he wrestled with the angel was merely the attempt to get a favor for himself.

#### I

There is, however, perennial significance in Jacob’s greater religious experiences. At first glance we should not be likely to pick Jacob out for special favors from the Lord. Much of what is recorded of him is shabby and mean, judged by our standards. Even though we remind ourselves that ancient Israel did not have our standards, we cannot always justify Jacob. Certainly Isaac and Esau saw nothing noble in Jacob’s conduct, no matter how much we may say about the approval of the Jews for shrewd bargaining.

How then can we understand the stress placed by the writer of Genesis on the dream of Jacob at Bethel as a revelation from the Lord? It seems clear that, psycho-

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logically, there were two men in Jacob—the crafty schemer and the potential religious leader, the man of the world and the man of God. The problem was to make the man of the world into the man of God. In doing this the divine procedure would have to start from the man of the world, in whatever condition he might happen to be. A distinguished religious teacher has recently said that Jesus always refused to deal with men as he found them. What this means is probably that Jesus refused to acquiesce in the conditions of men as he found them, but he always started with them where he found them. There was no other way.

It would almost seem that there was something arbitrary in the divine favor shown Jacob—as if, to use the old phrase, the Lord had elected him without regard to his deserts. In fact, there always seems to be something arbitrary in the divine choice of men to be leaders. As the characters of such men unfold it appears that there have been spiritual possibilities not first discernible to human insight. In case a man is a worthy leader, this consciousness of a special call is likely to make him humble in spirit rather than exalted. Knowing how little he deserves on his own account, he is not easily puffed up at the realization that he is called to a special task.

The men called of God in Old Testament times do not seem to have thought of their calls as promises of magic help. This is worthy of note because Oriental tales of help to men by supernatural beings are likely to bring in supernatural aid. That such help was promised and given is part of the unmistakable declaration of the Old



Testament, but the atmosphere in such declarations is not that of the Arabian Nights, for example. There are no magic carpets in Genesis. Jacob is conscious that the Lord has been with him, and believes that the Lord will continue to be with him. He promises to give a tenth of all that he gets to the Lord; but he has to earn what he gets, including the tenth which he gives. The call of the Lord to the men of old was like a summons from the peak of a mountain to come up to the summit. There was no way to get up except by climbing, but they had divine assurance that they would reach the top.

A supercilious critic finds the story of Jacob at Bethel a favorite point of attack on the claim of divine authority for the Old Testament. He thinks of the scene as revealing Jacob as a petty bargainer, and protests that the idea of God as a party to an agreement with such a character is degrading to the very conception of God.

There is no reason for making Jacob out as worse than he was. Rightly understood there is precious little in the story of Bethel to warrant criticism, once we take account of Jacob's characteristic alertness and quickness in anything having to do with his own interests. The Jewish reader found in the narrative a divine sanction for the tithe. We do not have to hold to the Jewish tithe as binding on ourselves to see its importance in the history of religion. It was an attempt to bring order and reason and seriousness into the Jewish service of the Lord. There are different kinds of rationalism in the approach to religion. The kind we hear most about tries to explain everything by the laws of human reason—a narrow and

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limited reason at best—reducing all the religious light to a dry, desert bareness which in the end is more of a strain on the eyes of the soul than the twilights and shades it is intended to replace. There is another rationalism which seeks to bring system and regularity and habit into the service of the Lord. The Jewish tithe did this with a success unparalleled.

It is easy to sneer at Jacob's suggesting a bargain involving a tenth, especially if we wish religion to remain in dreamland; but that overlooks the significance of the tenth as a manifestation of the genuine seriousness with which the people of Israel took religion. Giving a tenth implies a system—a religion run on a bookkeeping basis, of course; and to many poetic and some stingy souls this will give offense. As Jacob puts the proposition, it is rather crass; but the proposition was sound, at least as a start. It meant that religion of the type from which Christianity came was to take account of the divine in all the details of the workaday life. Such a resolution is not to be sneered at.

Another point of attack in the story is the agreement between the Lord and Jacob. We must recall the story of the Lord's agreement with Abram: that one of the essential factors in any religious practice worth following is the belief in a dependable God. Jacob's surprise at Bethel was only that God had visited him. In his speech with the Lord he assumed that the Lord was a being whose word could be trusted. Early religions, and many current ones for that matter, did not, and do not, make this assumption.

## FRANCIS JOHN M'CONNELL

It would be interesting to see how far this Jewish thought of God, as to be depended upon, helped the human race to order and steadiness in thinking. Max Weber, the noted German economist, once said that the Jews came early to commercial success because they so soon got rid of reliance on irrational magic and "signs." It may even be possible that the Jewish idea of God as a God of law helped mankind finally toward the notion of scientific law. At least a belief in a Lord who would be bound by his own covenants would be a better preparation for the acceptance of such law than the notions of other ancient peoples about their gods. Moreover, it was not far removed from the belief in a moral God. Jacob at Bethel was not much of a moralist, but he made a good start by entering into a binding agreement with the Lord.

The glory of Jacob was that God would get a chance at him. Faulty though he was, he had a window open to the skies. His daytime activities were abundant in guile, but he could dream of God. Esau could probably have chased wild game all day and then have slept soundly at night. There was little chance of getting at him, even in a dream. A man who lost his head at the first whiff of Jacob's stew had not much head to lose. Jacob was unmistakably of the earth, earthy; but he could be reached by the heavenly. He represents in himself much of the after-career of his people—a people prone to evil yet always haunted by dreams of God, with enough souls obedient to those dreams to get the truth of God on high forever.

## A GOOD WORD FOR JACOB

### II

The second scene—that of wrestling at the brookside—takes its start toward abiding significance out of the fact that Jacob was determined not to get into a conflict with his enemy Esau. A good many sharp things might be said about Jacob's unwillingness to fight. He was not too proud to fight, but he knew how to appeal to a foe with presents. He knew also how to dispose of his followers and of his herds so as to minimize the danger of attack. By comparison with many a warlike hero of the Old Testament, he can hardly escape being called contemptible. All of which is superficial. Jacob was acting under a heavy responsibility. He had been told of his large place in the plan of God. There was nothing in any Old Testament promise to warrant the belief that the promise would fulfill itself. Jacob may have been the biggest coward in the land, but he nevertheless acted wisely in seeking to avoid a fight with Esau. The consequences would have been too costly. He could not afford to win or lose.

To-day nations cannot afford to win victories in war. There is, of course, no justification for trying to fit an Old Testament lesson in detail to a present-day situation, but even in that far-away time Jacob saw that, whatever the outcome of a battle, it would be too costly. The accumulations of the years had been gained with too desperate a struggle to be risked, especially when they included not merely material things but wives and children—the children who were to be the channels of the fulfillment of the mighty promise made to Jacob. We of to-day know something of the price of a war which was at the hour of

its termination pronounced wholly successful. We see now that the presumably intelligent statesmen who talked proudly of the rewards of victory spoke as so many imbeciles. There have been no rewards except disaster and woe.

In the night scene by the brook Jacob showed courage of a high order. Probably every man in Jacob's land believed that special objects of nature, like running streams, had their protecting divinities, who might prove deadly adversaries. No such belief deterred Jacob from seizing what appeared to him an emissary from God, although he would have been justified in prostrating himself in abject fear. All the details of the narrative suggest that Jacob's thought of his struggle took on the form of a wrestle with a divinity. He knew that he dared not risk a battle with Esau, and that he dared not shrink from an encounter with the midnight messenger.

The idea of God expands with the passage of the centuries. The narrative in Genesis comes down to us from an era when men were just beginning to think of God in moral terms. The idea that he could be depended on to keep his word was a long step ahead in thinking. Jacob felt that a promise from a divine source would be of surpassing help to him in the work to which he had been called, and he was anxious for help from any quarter. The story of the scene would be worth little to us if it did not take in a profoundly inner meaning. Jacob was feeling an agony of conscience that had to be set at peace. The Church throughout the ages has not been far wrong

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in thinking of this incident as a type of inner struggle to get right with God.

It would not be fair to say that Jacob's conscience began to work only after he realized the danger of meeting Esau. Sometimes it is the immediacy of a peril which first brings home to an evildoer his wrong against the moral law. We have all known transgressors who apparently have not seen that they have been doing anything immoral until faced with exposure and punishment, but in such cases we should make a sad mistake to pronounce the remorse not genuine.

We must note not only Jacob's courage in facing the mysterious adversary at midnight, but his persistence as well. It is easy to miss the moral worth of the incident. We can say that there is nothing moral in just holding on. I am not sure that the teaching of a much later time, even that of Jesus himself, would warrant such a judgment. Jesus valued persistence very highly, as we see from the parable of the widow and the judge, and even from more direct utterances. Indeed persistence is about the most conclusive proof of genuineness and sincerity we have. It would hardly be conceivable that a moral divinity could grant moral favors to men unless men desired them enough to pursue them with the last ounce of their power.

XVII

*The Return of Satan*

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JOHN MILTON MOORE

MINISTER, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

JOHN MILTON MOORE was born in 1871 in Butler County, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Grove City College with the A.B. degree and graduated from Crozer Theological Seminary. Grove City College bestowed upon him the Doctor of Divinity degree.

He was ordained in the Baptist ministry. He was pastor at Wilksburg, Pa., and of the Centennial Church, Chicago, Ill., and Marcy Avenue, Brooklyn.

He was one of the General Secretaries for the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

He is now the pastor of the First Baptist Church, Bridgeport, Conn.

His sermons are always inspiring and gripping. He has been much in demand as special minister for Lenten Services.

He is the author of *Things That Matter Most*.



## XVII

### THE RETURN OF SATAN

JOHN MILTON MOORE

*The devil . . . departed from him for a season.*  
LUKE 4: 13.

THE popular demonstration to make Jesus King by the Sea of Galilee and the discussion that followed in the synagogue at Capernaum on the following day made one thing clear beyond question. The Kingdom is not to come quickly. Only in quite another sense of the words can it now be said that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. This experience must have been one of the major tragedies of Jesus' life. The people have their hearts set on a political leader and will have no other. Had Jesus been able and willing to offer them bread in abundance and physical comfort and political independence, they would have followed him to the death. This he could not do.

He is compelled to change completely the whole method of his ministry. From now on his hope rests with the twelve disciples who are still standing by. But they are bewildered and troubled and are far from promising stable support. Their minds had also been caught in the current of nationalistic and patriotic expectation. Whether they will ever be able to see that vision of a good earth which commands the mind and heart of Jesus, a Kingdom that does not rest on force, that is builded upon character and service and fellowship, is more than a little

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doubtful. But there is no other way than this long, slow, patient, educational process to which Jesus now addresses himself with the same utter devotion with which he had given himself to his public ministry of healing and teaching. From this time on they spent much of the time in retirement. The records are so scant as to throw but little light upon what they said and did during these quiet weeks and months in Northern Galilee. But these were the most fruitful months of his life.

They took one long trip together to the very northernmost bounds of the country, the region of Cæsarea Philippi, with the twofold object of finding time for intimate fellowship and at the same time getting out of the reach of Herod. He has become suspicious of Jesus' popularity and fears that his influence with the people may lead to revolt, and for this cause is now seeking to put him to death. It was a solemn hour, full of bitter disappointment and uncertainty, when Jesus turned with a weary heart from Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum, where most of his mighty works had been done. They were to have been veritable corner stones of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, these cities by the sea. He felt so sure that he knew how to make joy and gladness abound in their homes and on their streets and drive sorrow and sighing far away. But he had been rejected. What they desired he could not give them. What they desperately needed they would not receive. The heathen cities of Tyre and Sidon, in the direction of which they are now journeying, would have given him a friendly and more open-minded reception he verily believed. He had come

unto his own, and they that were his own had not received him.

And yet he is quite sure that salvation is of the Jews, though it is for all people. This conviction was reflected in his seemingly brusque response to the appeal of the Syrophœnician woman. She had somehow heard of the presence of this famous Jewish healer in their northern country and comes in behalf of her demented daughter pleading for the exercise on her diseased mind of his marvelous powers. "It is not fair," he said, "to take the children's bread and throw it to dogs." But he healed the child just the same and rejoiced as he always did in discovering that faith in Gentile hearts which Jewish men and women so often refused him. Still he could not leave his own country nor give up his own people. And so he tarried there on the borders of the Gentile world finding freedom among the glorious hills to talk long and earnestly with his disciples, that he might show them the way of the kingdom more perfectly. And there came one day the reward of all his prayer and patience with these slow, dull, misguided pupils.

As imagination pictures the little group sitting that day not far from the roadside under the sheltering limbs of a friendly tree that protects them from the heat of the noonday sun, they look like a group of workingmen, as in fact they were, in their dusty common clothes. It would have required spiritual insight of a high order to have imagined that anything that could have been said there that day could create a world-wide revolution. At the moment when we first catch sight of them they are all

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apparently laboring under some violent even though suppressed emotion. A painful silence has fallen on the group. Jesus' face is uncommonly sad and thoughtful. His eyes carry a far-away look as though he was not conscious of the beauty of the hills and valleys that lay before them, but saw something far away that stirred him deeply. Peter's face is a study. If it were the face of a child rather than that of a stern rugged fisherman, we should say that he is pouting. But there is more to it than that. There is in his frowning face the expression of the sense of some just indignation as well as the pathos of a hurt child. The others are nervous, restless, embarrassed. There has just been a painful colloquy between Peter and Jesus. It had started simply and pleasantly, had come up to a moment of quite dramatic intensity, and then had taken an unpleasant turn in the direction in which, to their bewilderment and distress, Jesus' mind has been running recently. It had ended in a quite violent verbal passage at arms that had not only completely spoiled the day for them all, but had left them fairly gasping in painful astonishment.

Jesus had asked them an innocent question which they had answered promptly and freely. "What are the people saying about me? Who do they think that I am?" "There are various opinions," they replied; "some say that you are John the Baptist come back to life." "Herod has been haunted by this fear." "Some say that you are Elijah come down from heaven. Some are not clear as to who you are, but are quite persuaded that you are one of the prophets."

Jesus was silent as though pondering their replies. Suddenly his face lit up and with an eagerness in his voice that fairly stabbed their souls he cried, "And you, what do you think about it? Who do you say that I am?" The question had come with a suddenness that was dramatic and almost terrifying. They wished that he had not asked it. They had never been able to agree even among themselves as they had so often during these recent months discussed that very question when Jesus was not present. They had wished to believe that he was the Messiah; O how they had wished it! But they had never quite succeeded. Concerning the Messiah they had read:

Behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

"The Son of Man shall lift up the kings and the mighty from their seats,  
And shall loosen the reins of the strong,  
And break the teeth of the sinners."

"He shall destroy the pride of the sinner as a potter's vessel.  
With a rod of iron he shall break in pieces all their substance,  
He shall destroy the godless nations with the word of his mouth;  
At his rebuke nations shall flee before him."

Jesus was not like this at all. And yet they had almost believed. His personality and power were unique and ir-

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resistible. "What if this be he?" they had said to each other again and again during these quiet days in the mountains. They had thought a good deal and said a little about what it would mean to them in terms of peace and power in the Kingdom if he, their friend and leader, should prove to be God's anointed. And now with the eyes of Jesus penetrating their very souls and his clear voice ringing in their ears they find themselves facing this question again, compelled to answer and to speak the truth. Peter finds himself first and, as was his wont, speaks for them all in a quick, confident confession in which, as he utters it, they know that he is speaking the inmost faith of them all: "You are the Christ." It was a tremendous word coming from these men on whom Christ's heart was set, coming now in the hour of his humiliation and rejection, and carrying in it such possibilities for the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. At last, thought Jesus, at last I have succeeded. It will be easier now to go forward. They believe in me. "You are a blessed man, Simon," says Jesus. "My Father told you this secret." His face is radiant. Not for weeks has it shone as now. "More than that," Jesus went on, "I say to you, Peter, that you are a rock, on which I shall build henceforth. Something has begun here this day against which every hostile power shall break in vain. Even death itself shall not defeat it."

It was one of those rare moments that seldom come in human experience and are never forgotten. The very air that they breathed was electric. In such a moment heaven comes to earth. Anything could happen. And then sud-

denly the radiance was dimmed as though a passing cloud had veiled the face of the sun. "There is more to this," said Jesus, "than I can tell you now. To-morrow we go south to Galilee and on to Jerusalem. We are walking straight into trouble. You know something of the opposition of the rulers. It is far more bitter and determined than you imagine. I can no longer move freely through Galilee. To think of seeking refuge in a foreign land is abhorrent. I shall go to Jerusalem. I shall make the final venture. I shall face the rulers of my people and accept the fate that they decree. I can do no less than this, though I foresee bonds and afflictions awaiting me." The disciples were stunned. Exalted to heaven but a moment ago, they have found themselves dashed suddenly to earth. But Jesus has not finished. Hard as this disclosure is for him, he must go through with it to the last terrible word. "You have been thinking of a throne," he said; "there is a throne awaiting me from which, after all, I shall rule the world. It is a Roman cross. I shall be crucified."

Peter had been growing more and more excited. As Jesus spoke that last terrible word, he rose suddenly with a cry of angry protest. That very week they had passed through one of the Roman cities where executions had left nigh a score of writhing victims on as many rough crosses. Familiar as they were with such scenes of brutal administration of Roman justice, they had all been unusually depressed by this wholesale execution. The cries of these desperate men began again to clamor at Peter's heart as Jesus foretells his own fate in these terrible terms.

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"Never," shouts Peter. "You should not talk like that. You know that this can never be. You are the Messiah. Take back those terrible words." His voice echoed up and down the mountain side.

It is now Jesus' turn to be aroused. He had announced his coming rejection and death in even tones from which both fear and bitterness were absent. But his eyes were flashing now. Something like terror appears in his face for just a moment, leaving an awful fear clutching the heart of each of the disciples as with a mighty hand. Looking Peter full in the face as he stands there in his grim determination to be done here and now with those dark foreshadowings of doom, Jesus spoke in a voice that might have come from some throne of eternal judgment. "Satan! Satan! Get thee behind me! What have I to do with you that you return to torment me?" Peter started back in horror. His distress is extreme. The Master's face softens in pity. "O Peter, Peter, you are hindering me. You think like a man, not like God."

It was under the stress of this terrible experience that we found the group there on the mountain side with Jesus so thoughtful and Peter so hurt and the disciples all so dazed. It was Jesus who broke the silence. "Listen, Peter," he said softly, all trace of emotion gone from the voice which but a moment ago was vibrant with feeling. "Listen, Peter, and I shall tell you a story. I think you will then understand why I who called you the blessed of my Father but a moment ago should now have branded you as Satan and drive you from before my face." And this is the story that Jesus told Peter as the others sat



with him in amazed silence, as imagination would fill in the brief outline of the New Testament record.

"Some of you know how on the evening of my baptism I went down into the wilderness. I wished to be alone with the Father to think through the revelation given me as I came up from the water. It was a lonely place with serpents underfoot and vultures overhead. A pitiless sun beat down in the daytime, and a penetrating chill fell upon the earth in the nighttime. The solitude of the wilderness possessed me, body and soul. But through all those days and nights my Father's voice was ringing in my heart: 'Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' At the same time my mind was challenged by a problem unsolvable as it seemed. I knew then what you have but recently discovered and just now declared, that I was the Messiah sent to deliver Israel. But the haunting, tormenting question that was with me night and day was, How? How can the attention of the people be arrested? How can the rulers be persuaded to hear and follow a Nazarene carpenter? How can the heart of Israel be turned from thoughts of vengeance on her enemies, from independence upon violence and force, to brotherliness and good will and love? I became famished. My body was weak and wasted from hunger and exposure and sleeplessness. And I found that Satan had come to the wilderness with me. I was fiercely tempted.

"It seemed to me then, as it has seemed to you, that the sons of God ought to be children of special privilege, that the Messiah ought to be immune from ordinary ills and privation. All about me were stones that looked like

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loaves of bread. Why not exercise divine power and change them into bread? And I was thinking not of myself alone. I knew how many hungry people there are in Israel. I felt the weight of the world's misery. The Father surely does not desire his little ones to starve. Through miracles like this I could not only minister to the poor, but I could also commend myself as the Messiah and secure a following. I wrestled with that temptation with all my spiritual energy. But at last it came clear. An old scripture came to my mind: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' Man's chief lack is not material, but spiritual. The spiritual is the real. Not an abundant supply of bread but a brotherly spirit is Israel's great need. No palliative measures are sufficient to bring in the Kingdom. There must be radical reconstruction. And it begins in the individual heart. I had won the victory.

"But the Tempter returned with a more subtle suggestion. 'You are the Messiah,' he said, 'you a carpenter of Nazareth. But how do you expect anyone to believe it? You must demonstrate your power over nature's laws in some way. Go at once to Jerusalem and present yourself at the Temple. It will be useless for you to come as an ordinary artisan. Make your appearance as becomes the Messiah. Cast yourself down from the top of the Temple. Land unhurt in the midst of the worshipers. There can be no danger, for is it not written, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone"?'"

"Again I was urged to use my special gifts to validate my claims. And on a higher level than that of bread for the body. If the Messiah may not claim this promise, for whom was it written? To take this course in introducing myself to Israel would arrest attention at once. It would be a demonstration of supernatural power. The people would believe in me. Was it not written, 'The Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple'?"

"Again the Scriptures came to my aid. Israel of old had sought thus to prove God and claim freedom from nature's laws. And his word had come through Moses clear and positive. 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' I saw the way in which I must walk. I knew that there would be insistent demand for a sign even as it has come to pass. But I resolved to stoop to no bid for cheap, quick popularity. I would not appeal to sense, but to conscience. I would not claim powers that set me off in aloofness from men. I would hold my gifts for service rather than personal aggrandizement. I would not seek to be safe and wondered at. I would accept normal human limitations. I would venture all on spiritual values. Again I had won.

"But the hardest trial of all was yet to come. I saw the kingdoms of the world, their power and their glory. I knew that they all belong by right to my Father. But love and kindness and good will seemed such feeble instruments with which to win them. I remembered how prone men are to depend upon force and armies, to resort to war. I knew the rebellious spirit that seethes in Israel at the very remembrance of Rome. Surely there must be some

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compromise of idealism if one is to gain a hearing. Our Scriptures justify war. Again and again Israel has appealed to the sword. Our cause against Rome is just. Our national honor is disgraced daily. The heel of the oppressor tramples on the hearts of the people. Surely God will approve righteous revolt. Surely the Father's heart is moved at the sufferings of his people. Surely he must be ready to break the oppressors with a rod of iron, as David saith, to dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel. With this temptation I struggled long. But again, the word of God came clear: 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' To compromise with violence is to deny God. To wage war is to serve Satan. Satan's weapons are worthless for God's battles. The Kingdom of God can be established only by love. 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' I cried with all the energy I could command. My physical exhaustion was almost complete, but my spirit was exultant. I had won the final victory. I came out of the wilderness to walk the way of love, to follow the path of pain. I would conquer the world with the sword of the Spirit, with the same weapon through which I had subdued my own wavering spirit."

He paused for a moment as he looked in Peter's eyes now filled with compassionate tears. "You understand now," said Jesus. "The tempter was not completely vanquished. Out there on the mountain side on the night on which you tried to make me King I fought the whole battle over again. And to-day in your violent though friendly words of protest against the cross, I heard his voice once more. In your countenance I saw his face. It

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was the old temptation renewed, to choose the easy way, to compromise, to forsake the Father, to serve Satan. My face is set to go to Jerusalem. There is no other way. And Peter said, 'Master, now I understand. Forgive me. We will go with you to Jerusalem. We will walk with you in the sorrowful way.' "



XVIII

*Eternal Vigilance*

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JAMES EDWARD FREEMAN

BISHOP OF WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

JAMES EDWARD FREEMAN was born in 1866 at New York City. He was educated in the public schools of that city and studied theology under Bishop Henry C. Potter. The degrees of Doctor of Divinity and Doctor of Laws have been conferred upon him by many universities.

He was rector of Saint Andrew's Memorial Church, Yonkers, N. Y.; Saint Mark's Church, Minneapolis, Minn.; and Epiphany Church, Washington, D. C.

He was made Bishop of Washington in 1923. He has been influential in building the beautiful Cathedral at Washington. He has been state preacher on many occasions and is well known in Church circles at home and abroad.

He is the author of *Man and the Master*, *The Ambassador*, *Everyday Religion*, and *Little Sermons*.



## XVIII

### *ETERNAL VIGILANCE*

#### *A THANKSGIVING DAY SERMON*

JAMES E. FREEMAN

THE nation is bidden to thanksgiving. A custom long observed among us once again becomes our practice. Rich and poor, in homes of every class and kind, are asked to recognize a common fellowship and to acknowledge a common obligation to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Irrespective of station, prosperity, or adversity, we are called on as a great family to remember with gratitude the favor and protecting care of Almighty God.

The fact that the past year has been one that has tried men's souls may not be submitted as a just cause for ingratitude. There are days in the calendar when we submerge our personal fortunes and misfortunes, and in the light of our larger communal interest see our place and part in the comprehensive scheme of things. This day fails of its purpose where the sense of our solidarity and unity is ignored or forgotten. Whether we are willing to recognize it or not, our lives are bound together by ties that are indissoluble. Where these ties are not recognized, where selfish individualism displaces the sense of corporate responsibility, we imperil society and the state. It were well that we freshly emphasize this to-day, as it is indispensable to our security and our continuing peace.

There is, throughout the entire area of our country, a

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condition that fills us with deep concern and anxiety ; it is a condition that knows no geographical limitations ; it is reflected in every part of the world. It is a condition that is making us, more than ever before, conscious of the fact that we share alike our fortunes or our misfortunes. There are times when we lose sight of the universality of our humanity, when we seem to forget the broader, fuller meaning of a world brotherhood. This we may not do now. Here in our own land a newer and finer demonstration of our interdependence is being furnished. We are witnessing more of the spirit of brotherly kindness, more of sacrificial giving of service and means than we have known for a generation past.

The call of the less fortunate is finding a ready and generous response, and in our individual and corporate life there are signs that men are thinking more deeply than heretofore about their obligations. Where a period of prosperity dulled our finer feelings and sensibilities, rendering us selfish and insular, a common misfortune, with its accompaniments of widespread distress and suffering, has made us sensitive and responsive to the ills of others. May we not discover, in this, one of the causes for our thanksgiving? If we can note an improvement in our outlook, if we can find that consciences are more sensitive, hearts and hands more ready to respond to the needs of others, we have causes for gratitude and praise.

Here may we acknowledge with thankfulness the finer spirit disclosed in industry. The period of dangerous drifting seems to be past. Call it altruism, a new sense of the value of coöperation or a finer exhibition of Chris-

tian good will, of equity and fair dealing than has been hitherto known. Where once bargaining and agreement were solely matters for capital to determine, now employer and employee, executive and worker plan together for mutual interests. Since when has it happened that great and sorely pressed corporations have asked for favors at the hands of workers? Since when have we heard from the head of one of our largest industries that capital and labor alike must share the fortunes or misfortunes that come with changed conditions and that labor must have reasonable guarantees in days of depression and enforced idleness? In these and other things we have occasion for thankfulness to-day.

We are not contending that in every aspect of our life we have attained ideal conditions. We are merely submitting evidences of an awakened conscience and a better and more consistent practice. That these hopeful conditions are coincident with and the result of a period of depression and unsettlement, is clearly obvious. They demonstrate that adversity, rather than prosperity, stirs the minds and wills of men and provokes them to reflection and nobler deeds of service. Here, indeed, we discover a compensating circumstance that gives us fresh courage to face the stern days that may lie ahead. In all this we are not unmindful of those gifts and blessings that lie beyond our power to design or create. Behind and beyond all our genius resides that which God alone has the power to bestow. Seedtime and harvest are evidences of the creative and bountiful will and purpose of a beneficent Father. Our best endeavors, our most splendid accom-

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plishments are conditioned by the manifestations of his goodness. Let there be but the failure of a single season, a breach in the orderly procession and sequence, and we are involved in disasters that all our ingenuity and skill cannot stay. It is ours to build, to devise, to organize, to manufacture. We build cities, create machinery, plan great enterprises, invent new pleasures, accelerate the activities of men, but we stand impotent and appalled where the fertility and productiveness of the field is impaired or drought or flood disturb the even tenor of the years. Where are our power, our boasted strength and skill, our vaunted self-dependence and our pride when the earth fails us or the sun withholds its shining? Little wonder that in his exaltation the poet of old exclaimed: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

We shall not be charged with too great insularity if on this day we give ourselves to reflection upon those things that lie close to our life as a people. This will not mean that we are unmindful of that more extended and inclusive vision that comprehends, in its sweep, world interests. As a nation we have enjoyed blessings and gifts that give us a place of commanding prestige and influence. Our rise and development have no parallel, and our growth along every line renders comparisons impossible.

Even our trials have proved undisguised blessings, and from days of shadow we have emerged stronger and more resourceful. We have passed through crises unscarred, with our unity unbroken and unimpaired. At times our

people have disclosed impulses and deeds of generosity that have lifted them to the levels of real nobility. We have at great cost struck the shackles from enslaved peoples and given of men and resources for the wider diffusion of the freedom we cherish. In our better hours we have risen to heights of selfless service and made the world our debtor. Our gates have stood open to the oppressed of other and less fortunate peoples. Youthful as we are, the escutcheon of our life as a nation shows fewer blemishes than our extraordinary growth would seem to warrant. In a daring and untried experiment in government, we have furnished an example that more and more commends itself to other and older races and peoples. To briefly chronicle the story of America's rise would command the gifted pen of one who dreams and sees visions.

No single Thanksgiving Day is sufficient to express our gratitude for what America has been, is, and is yet to be! We dare not let the heavy shadows of the present obscure our vision or render us unthankful for our inheritance. Unworthy sharer in this bounty he who is forgetful on this day of what he holds of blessings and privileges as a son of this Republic. In all this we lay no claim to our impeccability. We readily recognize our faults and acknowledge our shortcomings. We have much yet to learn and many hidden trails still to discover. Our pioneer days are not altogether past, there are mountains of difficult ascent yet to be mastered. Faced with seemingly insuperable and unsolvable problems, a pioneer of other days declared: "None of these things move men." He was unperturbed and undismayed by the difficulties that beset his path.

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There have been signs of late that betray the checking of our enthusiasm and the halting of our progress. Following days of extraordinary and too swift development we have sustained such a loss of confidence and initiative as we have rarely, if ever, known. The very machinery of our life has shown evidence of friction, and applied lubricants have failed to accelerate our forward movements. Our stored-up treasure is unimpaired; but it has, for the while, ceased to render service. An inarticulate fear paralyzes our industry and threatens us with dire calamity. Where once we pursued our course unlet and unhindered, we now walk with halting feet and minds shadowed by misgivings.

In such a situation the most adventuresome among us hesitates, and the less thoughtful and reflective sustains paralysis of energy. It is a condition that cannot and must not last. It has its genesis in conditions that must be courageously met and speedily remedied.

Apart from all causes extraneous to our life as a people, we have been faulty and recreant in our planning and scheming. Our economic and industrial structure has disclosed somewhere, in its footings or superstructure, defects that betray our lack of cunning and skill. The architects and engineers failed in their calculations, and the structure they builded lacks stability and capacity to endure. Possibly they conceived too grandiose plans and built too fast. Within a short space of time our cities were remade and our skylines became the wonders of the world. A nation famed for agriculture became a continent of cities, and our whole life reflected the spirit of a

new age. Work and play became our dominant pursuits. To "commit the oldest kind of sins the newest kind of ways," to satisfy an appetite for variety and change, this was the mad quest of youth and age alike. Our music itself suggested the ruling passion of the hour; filled with nervous action, blatant, crude, and barbaric, it bespoke the restlessness of our life and the surrender of our serenity. Domestic and social life alike discarded customs and conventions that had long stood the test, customs and conventions that spoke of decency, courtesy, and chivalry. The old order under such conditions could have no place of vantage. A new philosophy of life and its relations came to be. It was a philosophy that gave instinct the place of reason and made the satisfaction of the passions the right and privilege of every man. A clever analyst of the age and its trends discovers in our tendencies a reversion to type. We spring from the lower forms of life, we are simply returning to more primitive ways and habits. He says: "The present depression of humanity has its ground, I believe, solely in man's degraded sense of his origin. We began in mud and we shall end in mud. Humanity rots for a new definition of life." A severe stricture, but with an ominous significance. The large question that faces us on this latest day of national thanksgiving is, Can the drift of our age, unarrested and unstayed, bring us to those higher stages of development and satisfaction that have been the quest of men in all ages and places? The query is a pertinent one, and upon its answer rests the future form and character of our civilization. What we do to-day inevitably determines

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our future to-morrow. We shall leave to our children and our children's children a heritage that will either lift them to higher levels or lower them to depths we, in our better hours, regard as unwholesome and unsatisfying. Beyond all our efforts to restore order and the resumption of normal conditions in commerce and industry, this of which we speak is primary. We shall doubtless see the end of our present distress and depression, unemployment will give place to new and, let us hope, better and more equitable conditions; we shall go on our way in pursuit of trade and the stabilizing of our industries. When all this is accomplished, whither are we headed? Have we the capacity and the will to learn the mighty lessons which this hour is seeking to enforce?

Such questions as these we cannot ignore, else we shall experience even more tragic and somber days than those through which we are now passing. We of America have no original and unique cures for our ills. We are the possessors of a great estate (someone calls us "the most wasteful people in the world"), and our immediate and conspicuous problem is one that has to do with so securing to those that shall follow after what we held, that they shall be saved from the perils that destroy both peace and security. "After me, the deluge," was the selfish declaration of a royal prince, and the deluge came. The present hour is critical, and unrest and disillusionment hold the world's people in their grip. If the more reflective and sober among us cannot be made to see, and see quickly, the urgent need for determined and certain action looking to the buttressing and stabilizing of the structure we call



"Christian civilization," there are dark and shadowy days ahead.

Society is held together by other and stronger ties than those that have to do with commerce and industry; even Federal and State laws do not guarantee the moral character of a people. They have their essential place, but obedience to their mandates is not secured through courts or an alert and efficient constabulary. A few victims who pay the penalty of disobedience will not mitigate the evils which the unapprehended effect in the corporate life of society. It is not the lawlessness of the few who are branded as criminals that constitutes our peril, it is rather the lawlessness of the many, often more privileged classes, who safeguard themselves against detection and exposure. The people in this country who are sapping the foundations of our institutions are, in the main, those whose education, wealth, and position should compel them to be vigilant against the day of disaster.

We cannot recognize, nor should we, any privileged class. This is not an autocracy; it is a democracy, and the sooner we deliberately and decisively set ourselves to make this evident to all men, the sooner will we restore that quiet, security, and prosperity which we desire and long for. I am quite aware that all this seems foreign to the spirit of this day, but I am reminded that thankfulness for blessings past and blessings to come is of little worth, unless we insure these blessings by recognizing the means to their attainment.

I am speaking from the Cathedral in the Nation's Capital, a great building that stands primarily for righteous-

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ness, justice, and truth; a building that is the eloquent witness to those things that the fathers of the Republic conceived to be basic and fundamental. I am speaking with a due recognition of the perils of our present situation and with sensitive consideration for those whose needs make them this day seem unreasonable and unworthy. I am doubtless speaking to others whose boards will bear witness to comfort and plenty; it is a day for all such to be stirred to action, to a fresh consideration of what is their solemn obligation and weighty responsibility. We have known in other days the pressure of adversity, but we have not known such new and strange conditions as this hour presents. Let us be quite clear in this, that the temporary alleviation effected through Federal, State, or community relief agencies is but an ephemeral and unsatisfactory panacea. These things we will and we must do, but they will tragically fail of their purpose unless they witness to our determination to set our house in order and to affect such wholesome and salutary changes as shall guarantee us against more grave and lasting misfortunes.

This is a home day, and to begin with the home is our first duty. Disasters, in all the aspects of our life, have their genesis here. A disordered and disorderly home is a menace to the community in which it is placed. A social practice that is vicious and that violates all the proprieties or that in such days as these discloses extravagance and excess of indulgence is threatening to our very security. One such ostentatious exhibition may do more to foster and promote unrest and lead to violences than all our wholesome institutions have the power to resist and

overcome. A brief study of the later phases of Russian life under the old régime might prove profitable and wholesome at the present time. There is an irresistible logic in events that all too frequently we overlook. The breaking down of all law, and radical changes in the social and economic order, follow with irresistible force the practices and habits of those who selfishly live unresponsive and indifferent to the common weal.

We should certainly be recreant at such a time as this, did we not discover the essential place which religious faith and practice hold in the scheme of our life. There are doubtless conditions under which a misdirected and misinterpreted religious zeal may become the opiate of the people. Religion may, at times, be employed to repress and hold in bondage the ignorant and those who are compelled by circumstances to obey the dictum of its false and sometimes corrupt teachers. This can hardly be used as an argument against the proper and wholesome disciplines which a right recognition of religion imposes.

It is for this we plead to-day.

That the relaxing of all wholesome religious practices can tend to advance our condition and insure to us a larger freedom and a greater security will be doubted, even by those who make no profession of religion. In our scheme of life religion does occupy a conspicuous and essential place. Said a keen observer to us lately: "The building of a great cathedral in such a day as this seems strange and anomalous, especially when the drift is so distinctly away from the Church and the observance of religious obligations." We do not accept this observation

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as accurate; but if it is even partially so, it reflects a state of mind and a condition that should give us more concern than the present dislocation of industry with all its attendant ills. That the morale of a people is grounded in a religious conviction, and that it is a vital element in shaping their conduct, is clearly evident. The morality of a people determines their habits and their stability. Of late we have seemed to think that we can get on without these elements in our life. Where they are not recognized a situation inevitably ensues that issues in disorder, lawlessness, and criminality, and may ultimately lead to conditions wherein life itself is insecure.

We cannot buy our peace or our permanence in the open markets of the world where we freely purchase our luxuries. Restricted as our religious institutions are in their operation, ineffective as they may be by reason of the limitations of those who administer them, they cannot be disregarded or ignored when we are reckoning our safeguards. The nation's first line of defense, now and always, is the moral character of its citizens. Let this be undervalued or indifferently regarded, and we not only lower our standards; we imperil our most cherished institutions. No thoughtful or reflective citizen can lightly esteem signs that the very criticalness of this present period makes evident. Our national situation cannot be regarded as immune to certain ominous conditions that prevail throughout the world. There are malevolent forces that avowedly design the breaking down of our institutions. They are aided and abetted by a propaganda that works ceaselessly, zealously, and covertly, night and

day. They reckon not with religion, it is a spent force; life has no sanctities, no decencies, no binding marital ties, no code of ethics, no reverence—no God. To fulfill the lusts of the flesh, to abolish all initiative, all attainment, all honor, these they would have us recognize as the new order.

There are those of intelligence and position in our own and other lands who are disposed to play with such sophistries and in doing so imperil the State. The only instrument that can combat these elements is an awakened and aroused civic conscience and consciousness. It was once boldly affirmed that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." We need a revival of this to-day, but it must be a revival that bears witness to our determination to better, more consistent, more wholesome living. Above all else, this nation needs a deep, penetrating, character-forming revival of religion. It must be a revival that touches with its revivifying and renewing power every phase and aspect of our life. It must mean better and fairer relations between employer and employee in shop and workroom, more wholesome and cleanly conditions in our domestic and social life, more of equity and justice in judicial procedure, more of high-minded patriotism and self-giving in the administration in the affairs of state and nation; less of greed and oppression, of graft and corruption in all human relations; in fine, a truer approximation of the Christian ideal of living.

Let us be solemnly admonished on this, our national Thanksgiving Day, that we will with consistency and renewed consecration set ourselves to the greatest task that lies before us, or surrender ultimately to forces that will

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make havoc of our institutions. America holds a proud and enviable position among the nations of the earth to-day; if she would preserve to posterity her most treasured institutions, the institutions she holds most dearly, let her be aroused from her dream of a new era of prosperity and gird herself to a task that will test her moral courage and her spiritual worth to the utmost.

To the homes of the Republic, the homes of native sons and foreign-born alike, we send, from the Cathedral in the capital, affectionate greetings and the assurance of our high hopes that there may come, and come speedily, the day of better things, when peace and contentment shall dwell at every fireside and men and women and little children shall be safeguarded and secured by a virile and supporting Christian faith.

XIX

*Lengthen the Cords*

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ANGIE FRANK SMITH

BISHOP, METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH  
HOUSTON, TEX.

ANGIE FRANK SMITH was born in 1889 at Elgin, Tex. He graduated from Southwestern University with the A.B. degree. The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by the same institution. He was also a student in the School of Theology at Vanderbilt University.

He was ordained in the Methodist ministry. He has been pastor at Highland Park, Dallas, University Church, Austin, Laurel Heights, San Antonio, and First Church, Houston.

He was made Bishop in 1930.

He is a member of the Commission on the Revision of the Hymnal of the three participating Methodist Churches and one of the episcopal members of the General Board of Lay Activities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

He is an attractive and forceful preacher of the Word.



## XIX

### LENGTHEN THE CORDS

A. FRANK SMITH

*Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.*

ISAIAH 54: 2, 3.

THE historian of the future will undoubtedly refer to the first quarter of the twentieth century as a Golden Era in the life and accomplishments of the Church in America. It has been a period of remarkable prosperity and expansion upon the part of the American nation, and the Church has shared in this advance. A gigantic building program has placed adequate houses of worship all over the land, ranging from stately temples to modest chapels, while schools, hospitals, and various types of eleemosynary institutions have been builded from border to border. The post-war missionary movements raised hundreds of millions of dollars, and extended the activities of the Church unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Internally, this period has been marked by great strides in the realms of sane Biblical scholarship, and of constructive approach to the problems of religious education.

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Outside the Church, her influence has manifested itself in a deepening of the sense of social responsibility in business and government. There has been steady improvement in industrial relations, on the whole; every community, however remote, has a sense of social responsibility manifesting itself in service clubs and various types of welfare organizations, while city, county, state, and national governments have revealed a steadily increasing interest in their social obligations. Verily, it seemed that we were on the road to perfection and, given due time, the Kingdom of God would be ushered in through the orderly development of the ecclesiastical, social, and industrial systems in vogue.

Such is the picture of the Church and society in general, and such was the thinking upon the part of multitudes, both within and without the Church. Then came the disillusionment! Our vaunted prosperity proved to be mere inflation, and in the resultant collapse our house was pulled down about our ears. It is not necessary to dwell upon the developments of these years of the "depression," to cite the abject want in the face of abundance, to speak of the bewilderment and despair evident upon all sides, nor of the grim specter of revolt that constantly hovers over us. Suffice it to say that our social and economic system has proven unequal to the demands laid upon it, and we have suffered a brutal awakening from our smug complacency of past years. We are not interested, in this connection, in discussing the causes of this condition, nor in elaborating upon proposed remedies; but we are tre-

mendously interested in the part the Church has to play, both to-day and in the days to come, in the reshaping of the life and thinking of the people.

Not since Jesus walked the streets of Jerusalem has there been greater need for the preaching of his gospel, nor a more propitious day for its application. The world is in a ferment, socially, politically, industrially, intellectually; the shell of complacency is shattered, change is in the air. Men yearn for, and will hearken to, the voice that speaks with assurance and authority.

What is the message the world needs today, to what call will it respond? Unquestionably the supreme need of the world to-day is a call to the impossible, a challenge to attempt that which is utterly futile, if not foolish, measured by human standards alone.

What of the Church? Are we able to sound this call, and to lead the way? In all honesty, the Church must face certain facts that grow out of her very prosperity of past days, and we must set our own house in order before we dare sound any call to the world. The prosperity of the years preceding and following the World War, together with our absorption in "Drives" and "Goals" and "Quotas," served to identify these tangible things as ends within themselves, and the mission of the Church, in the thinking of multitudes, was achieved when we "went over the top" in this movement or that. Money was plentiful and our people responded in unprecedented fashion to all these calls; more money was given for religious and altruistic purposes during those years than in any similar period of

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time in the history of the race. And with what result? In the first place, there was little of self-denial represented in this giving. Out of our abundance we gave of the overflow; there was no need for sacrifice. Neither did our giving increase in proportion to the increase in our standard of living, and our expenditures for luxuries. In the second place, we developed a spirit of complacency and self-satisfaction. Our spiritual demands were largely met when we had done our part toward reaching the "quota"; it was easy for most of us to achieve our idealism. To be moral and generous, a good citizen, and a good parent was all that could be expected of one, anyway. This complacency was revealed in our attitude toward life in general. So long as we were getting along all right, why be bothered about abuses in government, in business, in the social order?

We did not seem to be terribly in earnest about anything save in getting along ourselves, and the capacity for high moral indignation was in sad eclipse. Witness our indifference to the growing disrespect for constituted authority, manifest on all sides, and to corruption in business and government, high and low. The truth of the matter is that the Church has become soft, through ease, through lack of self-denial, through self-satisfaction; our reach no longer exceeds our grasp. I do not mean to bring wholesale indictment against the Church, nor to impugn the loyalty and zeal of faithful men and women, who are to be found in every congregation. I simply call attention to a condition that exists, growing out of the times through which we have passed, and a condition which is both a rebuke

and a challenge to the Church. We must purge ourselves of this softness, we must dedicate ourselves, under God, to that life which is utterly beyond the comprehension of the world, if we would speak with authority to a confused, despairing humanity. As in the days of the Prophet, God calls to us to "lengthen our cords," to widen our horizons, to strike our tents for the march that is before us.

In three particulars must we "lengthen our cords." First, in complete personal consecration to Jesus Christ; second, and growing out of the first, in an honest attempt to apply the principles of Jesus to all departments of life; third, and likewise growing out of the first, in a vivid consciousness of our immortality.

First: personal consecration to Jesus Christ.

Relation to Jesus as the Lord of all life must be preceded by the proper attitude toward God. Not a new attitude, or truth, but the vitalization of one of the primal articles in the common creed of Christendom is the need of the Church. The Sovereign Nature of God is accepted wherever men call his Name, but this truth has largely lost its power in our thinking. During the Colonial Period, and in the early days of the Republic, life was hard, and the type of life they lived was reflected in the thinking of the people about God; his sovereignty and his inexorable judgment was ever before them. "It was an iron creed, but it made iron men, so that the world never knew braver or stronger men. This humbling creed, this ennobling creed, which made a man feel that he was an instrument and messenger of Almighty God, made mighty men, men who would neither bend nor bow, who feared none but God,

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who with splendid courage crashed against all sorts of tyrannies and wrongs." Such was the faith that laid the basis of our American civilization and culture. With the passing of time, however, life became easier, and there developed a love of ease that reflected itself in the religious thinking of the people. Less and less were the sovereignty of God, his awful holiness, and his judgments stressed; more and more were his love, and sympathy, and forgiveness emphasized—with the result that the extreme that pictured God as a stern, always just, yet implacable judge of all men, has given way to an extreme that conceives of God as so tender and forgiving, so sympathetic and understanding, that judgment plays small part in our calculations. No longer overwhelmed with a sense of awe in the Divine Presence, no longer oppressed with a realization of our own unworthiness, we inevitably lose the consciousness of sin, we forget the meaning of real repentance. Such is the attitude toward God of multitudes of our people to-day. A genial humanitarianism is the prevailing temper of the hour.

The basis of all righteousness is the proper attitude toward God, and it is idle to prate about spiritual guidance till we have set ourselves right in this basal relationship. When love is divorced from justice and judgment, it is no longer love, it is mere sentimentality, and weak sentimentality at that. The prophets of all ages have been men to whom the judgments of God were tremendously real; such realization puts iron in the blood and the spirit of the martyr in the soul.

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With a rebirth of the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God in our souls, we will repent, and prostrate ourselves before him, and we shall then be prepared to enthrone Jesus in our lives. One wonders to what extent we are willing to take Jesus seriously, and to go all the way with him, whatever the cost may be. This generation knows little of a consecration that costs anything; we have admired the beauty of Jesus' life, we have acknowledged the wisdom of his teachings, we have used the cross as a symbol in art and worship; but it has not cost us anything in blood or sweat or pain. Why? Because our conception of the Christian life has not demanded a break with established conventions, nor a varying from the routine of accepted regimen. It has not meant the impossible to us.

It has been said that, even as the Lutheran Revival emphasized Justification by Faith, and the Wesleyan Revival the Witness of the Spirit, so will the next great revival emphasize the personality and preëminence of Jesus. O Church of the Living God, lengthen your cords, that the world may see what Christ-filled men and women may be and do!

In the second place, we must lengthen our cords with respect to the application of the principles of Jesus to all the problems of life. The time is upon us when the social order should be, and must be, Christianized to an extent never before possible. Too long have we accepted the present economic and social system as inviolable. Whatever the future may bring, one thing is certain: it will witness vast changes in the social and economic set-up of the races of the earth. Those changes may be in the direction

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of an atheistic communism, or they may be a definite step toward the incoming of the Kingdom of God among men. The issue is in our hands. We hear much about keeping religion and politics and business in their respective places. As though it were possible to separate them! The Church is not a political party, nor an economic theory, nor a social creed; but the Christian is a follower of Jesus in his political alignments, his business practices, and his social contacts.

The saving of souls and the building of character constitute the only justification the gospel of Jesus knows for the making of money and the maintenance of social and governmental organizations. To an alarming extent the rank and file of our citizens have lost confidence in the ability, and even in the integrity, of business and government. There rests upon spiritually-minded men and women to-day the double necessity of restoring confidence in business and in government, and of charting the future path of each along sane constructive lines. We are face to face with imminent social changes and legislation of far-reaching import; let right-thinking men and women approach these changes with open minds, and in the spirit of Jesus! The problems of unemployment, of changed standards of living, of proper distribution of wealth, of international trade relations and war debts and disarmament are questions that affect the life and destiny of hundreds of millions of people. Never before has there been the opportunity to apply the principles of Jesus to the problems of humanity in such wholesale fashion as is the case to-day.



## ANGIE FRANK SMITH

The development of the machine age calls for a corresponding increase in our sense of moral responsibility. Either we use these increased powers for the welfare of the race and the glory of God, or the forces of evil will use them to the destruction of humanity. The machine age must be spiritualized, or it will inevitably destroy itself and the race with it. Every economic and moral reform calls for an increased discipline upon the part of the race, that the reform may succeed, and the years just ahead of us will require a courage, a stability, and a power of self-discipline far beyond that demanded of any generation in modern times.

In the third place, we must "lengthen our cords" with respect to the consciousness of our immortality. Perspective determines values; values are created by the standard of measurement employed. The house fly is old at twenty-four hours, the oak tree is young at one hundred years. The person to whom the span of life between the cradle and the grave is all of existence, necessarily cannot have the sense of values of that one to whom the grave is but an incident, and for whom this life is but a novitiate. Values for the former must be determined by more or less immediate realization, while the latter has the long look. Life for him is not a battle, but a war, the war of the ages; the first consideration is not the winning of any one battle, but the winning of the war. It was so with Paul: "I have fought *in the good fight*." The supreme measure of values is not, Am I winning now? but rather, Am I on the right side?

Perhaps the early Church was too "otherworldly" in its

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thinking. Such a charge has been laid at its door, whether justified or not. But most certainly that cannot be said of the Church of to-day. We have need to cultivate the long look, to shake ourselves loose from the narrow confines of things and of time, to realize that God knows nothing of time, and that the calendar is an expedient of the finite mind. We need to know with every waking moment that we are the children of God, and that our immortality is not some mystical vestment to be donned at the grave, but that it has already begun, never to be interrupted, and that it is the most inevitable and practical consideration with which we have to deal in this sphere of existence.

Imbued with this consciousness of our divinity, we find the Glory of God in all of life, and difficulties constitute the altar stairs that lead into his Presence.

"I am aware  
As I go commonly sweeping the stair,  
Doing my part of the everyday care—  
Human and simple my lot and share—  
I am aware of a marvelous thing:  
Voices that murmur and echoes that ring  
In the far stellar spaces where cherubim sing.

I am aware of the passion that pours  
Down the channels of fire through Infinity's doors;  
Forces creative, with melody shod,  
Music that mates with the pleasure of God.

I am aware of the glory that runs  
From the core of myself to the core of the suns.  
Bound to the stars by invisible chains,  
Blaze of eternity now in my veins,  
Here in the midst of the everyday air—  
I am aware!"

ANGIE FRANK SMITH

We live in a tragic, but a glorious day. The world desperately needs, and will have, direction of some sort; the destiny of generations hangs upon the nature of that direction. Under God, and in his Name, his Church will not fail him in this hour.

“God, what a world, if men in street and mart  
Felt that same kinship of the human heart  
Which makes them, in the face of fire and flood,  
Rise to the meaning of true brotherhood.”



XX

*The Sin of Neutrality*

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JOHN ALEXANDER HUTTON

EDITOR, THE BRITISH WEEKLY  
LONDON, ENGLAND

JOHN ALEXANDER HUTTON was born in 1868 at Coatbridge, Lanarkshire, England. He attended preparatory schools in Glasgow and graduated with the degree of Master of Arts from Glasgow University. The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity has been conferred upon him.

He was ordained to the ministry in Alyth, Perthshire, in 1892. He was called to Bristo Church in Edinburgh, 1898; Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1900; Belhaven, Glasgow, 1906; and was minister at Westminster Chapel in 1923.

He has been editor of the *British Weekly* since 1925.

He is in constant demand throughout England and Scotland as a preacher on anniversary occasions. He has been the lecturer on preaching at Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Glasgow Universities.

He is the author of many books, the best known of which are *Pilgrims in the Region of Faith*, *The Authority and Person of Our Lord*, *The Winds of God*, *The Fear of Things*, *The Proposal of Jesus*, *That the Ministry Be Not Blamed*, *Victory over Victory*, *There They Crucified Him*, and *Guidance from Francis Thompson in Matters of Faith*.

He is a world figure in religion.

## XX

### THE SIN OF NEUTRALITY

JOHN A. HUTTON

. . . . *And shall ye sit here?*

NUMBERS 32: 6.

PERHAPS we human beings find our surest guidance through life not so much by the help of lights which invite us to come their way, as by lights which warn us off. In short, for the most part we are sure, not so much of what is right, as we are of what is wrong. Again and again in the course of our life we may not be quite certain that some precise way is the right way and later on and at the last will prove to have been the right way; but at such times of hesitation and perplexity in almost every case we know that certain alternative courses which are possible are in fact forbidden.

Many a time, I am sure, we must all of us have stood at some such crossroads in our personal life. We did not know (how could we know?) which was the right way—the way of honor, or of faith. But when we confronted our minds with the alternatives which offered themselves to us, we were always able to say of one thing and another, that whatever might be the right way, this or that was the wrong.

And so, as a matter of history, the great moral codes, like the law of Sinai, take in the first instance the form of negatives and prohibitions: not “Thou shalt” but “Thou

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shalt not." And when the attempt is made, say by our august Shorter Catechism, to define the nature of God, and to describe the nature of the truly good life, this is done really by a process of negation and exclusion to the effect that God is not this or that, and that the truly good life is not this or that. In fact, positive and negative are the same thing from different sides—and it is the negative side alone with which we human beings are, to begin with, competent to deal.

It is because that principle is very clearly in my own mind and supported by my own experience that I do not allow myself to be depressed, say by the criticism that the Church is always a little behind the age, that she does not lead with a kind of Chorybantic confidence. Life is always earlier than wisdom. And life must be allowed to get under way before it can be directed. A ship's rudder is very satisfactorily placed at the stern of the ship. Placed there, it guides the huge mass—how? By a series of restraints and restrictions. A ship's helm, you might say, does not guide the ship in the appointed way. The ship's helm, by a series of resistances, simply forbids the ship from going any way but the very way that the master has chosen. There is first that which is natural, and afterwards—in the rear, that is to say, but related organically to this urging, wayward, capricious, disastrous mass—afterwards that which is spiritual.

We may not be quite sure at this moment, and we may never be absolutely sure, that man, the human race, or you and I, are related inextricably to God. We may never be quite sure, sure without the possibility of the slightest



misgiving, that there is something in us which separates us from every other creature, something of such a kind that death cannot touch it but can only set it free to enter upon an eternal career—we may never be quite mathematically certain of all that. But we are absolutely certain of this—that whenever man has adopted any other view of himself, and has acted with thoroughness upon that other view, whenever he has fallen in with his lower and merely physical nature, he has in the long run (and that not a very long run) let loose within himself a disorderliness, and fear of life, a panic and sense of shame, such as has taught him that, whatever be the final truth about him, the lower interpretation is not the truth. It may be that, in the long way by which he has come, man arrived at God as the result of certain terrible experiments from the consequences of which he swung back this way and that way, until some man of genius hit upon the truth—that the true way for man was midway between the various oscillations, and to that mid-channel he gave a name which we have baptized into the name of God.

## I

All this and much more was suggested to my mind by a few words and a particular phrase which I read in the press the other day. An Ambassador of a great and friendly Power, speaking on some occasion, doubtless an informal one, reviewing the situation in Europe at this moment where once again it would seem as though we were on the edge of disastrous events—reviewing all that, declared that his country was well out of it all, that she was

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lucky not to be entangled in this European strife. In fact, his own words were even more robust and heartfelt; for he is reported to have said that his country was "damned well out of the League of Nations."

Now the first effect of those words upon me was this: that whatever may be the right course to take with regard to Europe, *that* certainly is the wrong course; that whatever be the right and helpful attitude to take up toward people, toward a nation or a race which is in trouble, even when that trouble may be partially or entirely the result of their own stupidity or wickedness, it is never right to stand apart and to congratulate ourselves that we have made such arrangements for ourselves or have inherited such securities that we think we are able to stand apart.

## II

Next moment almost I was not thinking at all of the Ambassador; for I am one of those who will never permit themselves to doubt that that great people wishes well to the human race and has already given many a token that when her heart and conscience are engaged she will scorn all consequences to follow where they beckon.

What happened in my own mind was that I suddenly perceived the very nature of Christianity, its sign through all the ages from the moment away beyond time when it first leapt in the womb of eternity and took form in the mind of God: I might have some difficulty in saying offhand and adequately what Christianity is; but I can say at once that the spirit or mood of impatience or con-

tempt of man's pathetic blundering and sinning which can express itself in such a phrase as "we are damned well out of that trouble" is the definite and precise opposite and contradiction of Christianity. If from eternity God had acted in such a spirit or had given way to such a mood of petulance and scorn of us, we might still have been black animals fighting among the trees or tearing each other in the slime of the earth. And if no higher thought had ever been entertained by man, as he pondered the harsh lot of his fellows, lepers would still have been left everywhere to rot in their graves; the poor to crouch and crawl in sunless dens; and the highest wisdom of the world would have been a cold and shrewd contempt for weakness, the negation of God in fact erected into a system.

But, God be praised, he was always regarded as a poor specimen of the race who first quoted this low philosophy to evade the disclosure of his crime and asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Yes: I do not know a saying which so swiftly can tell us our whereabouts in the spiritual world as such a saying like that about "being well out of some trouble." It is like a plummet let down from heaven; so that we need none of us be in a moment's doubt as to what God thinks of us.

### III

Of course, "we may all keep out of things"; but our religion is unanimous on this, that we cannot keep *well* out of things: that in fact if we still feel *well* when we keep out of things which should engage our sympathy and the devotion of all our powers, it can only be because we are

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“damned well out of them”: that is to say, we are *well*, but *damned*! For in a great parable of our Lord’s that is the very definition of those who are lost—that they are outside, outside some task and experience so great that to go through with it one must think incessantly on God and on the very God who in Christ took part with us in life and in death.

### IV

The Bible, Old and New Testament alike, has some great stories illustrating the spirit which stands outside some troublesome task, and even takes credit to itself for its bearing. There is, for example, that story of the men of Reuben and of Gad who proposed to keep what they had secured and to let the other ten tribes fend for themselves. They were very frank about it. They said: “This is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle. Let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.” That is to say: “We are all right. Why then should we not settle down with what we have? Why should we postpone settling down until our brethren are all settled down? Why should we not settle down happily with our wives and children in this land which suits us so very remarkably that it would almost seem as though God had been thinking of us when he made it?” To which Moses in effect retorted: “The reason why you must not settle down peacefully until your brethren are all settled, is that you are men, and they are your brethren. To wipe out that, is to wipe out the sun. It is to repudiate the human soul. It is to deny God and

the Spirit. It is to rank themselves with your cattle. They want to stop and eat amongst the luscious grass: and so do you. You forget that the men of the other ten tribes helped you to fight your battles. But for them where would you have been in the day when Amalek attacked us all?" In fact, what was struggling to the lips of Moses was what we know: that life is historical and organic. That we have all of us come on what we have in the way of amenity and security and well-being, not as the result of our own ability or endurance; but always as the result of everything that has gone before. We have all shared each other's visions and the fruits of the travail of others' souls. We are debtors to every nation on the earth, having learned all we have learned, not from our own springs, but from the wide world. Who gave us our thoughts of God? Who, of beauty? Who, of law? Who, of political and personal freedom? Were they not the Jews, and the Greeks, and the Romans, and the Northern races of which French, German, British, and American are families and branches?

But Moses said more. He said in effect: I cannot explain how these things work. But I do know that no man and no nation can stand apart from the sufferings and the miseries, from the sins even, of his fellow men, and escape a secret and devastating retribution. It is a sin which, though it may have the look of virtue, almost more than the sin of a high hand, weakens us and finds us out.

## V

In the New Testament we have the story from our

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Lord's lips, and his judgment, of first a priest and then a Levite who, going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, saw a man lying in a ditch. The same idea, it would seem, occurred to both of them: though there was no collusion. That they would be well to have nothing to do with the business! Perhaps they admitted that it was a sad business; but—and then they may have recalled all sorts of proverbs and epigrams such as occur readily to us all to justify ourselves in our own eyes. They may have muttered something to themselves about the foolishness of "asking for trouble," and how a man does well who "minds his own business." At any rate, they crossed to the other side of the road and pretended not to notice the heap in the ditch which certainly had looked like the body of a man. I doubt whether they were very comfortable, as I doubt very much whether anyone is comfortable when he is behaving as he rather suspects he ought not to behave. But in a little while any uneasiness would pass. They would perhaps even forget the entire incident. Or if it came back into their minds, they would say that they were "well out of it."

But two thousand years of Christian thinking has pilloried those men for their behavior, agreeing indeed that they were well out of it but that their deed damns them forever.

## VI

But we may learn what in the view of our Lord himself was the very essence and spirit and entire meaning and purpose of his intervention in history, from ponder-

ing the nature of the first pitched battle which our Lord himself had to engage in. We call it the Temptation in the Wilderness. But what was the nature of that Temptation? Was it not simply an appeal to Jesus to take the low and easy way through life? To let things alone? To keep clear of the disputes and discussions and animosities which indeed were bitter and squalid enough? To this end the devil flattered Jesus. He told him in effect that he was too good, too fine, to be mixed up in these affairs. That he would only get hurt. That meanwhile he would do no good. That men were men, meaning, as we always mean when we say that, that men are not men, but animals. That they were all out for their own hand. That it was folly to suppose they could ever come together and unite on some beautiful interpretation of life.

Now what makes temptation a real thing, so that the heat of its appeal mounts and mounts until, unless we close our ears and run, or unless we are as pure as God, we shall succumb—what makes the heat and power of a genuine temptation is that there is an immense amount of truth in it. That would never be a temptation to any of us which at the very moment we could see through. So it was when our Lord was tempted forty days in the wilderness. All that the Tempter said was true. It was a bitter and squalid arena on which our Lord would have to attempt his task. It was a people of debased and petty ideals that our Lord would have to address that language of the spirit which after two thousand years is still like Noah's dove seeking for a resting place. It was true that if he interfered he would be hurt. It was true that if he

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got mixed up in their disputes he would be caught in malicious wheels; and, displeasing one party and the other, he would be done to death by both. It was all true. But it was not all the truth. For it omitted God. And it omitted Man. It forgot that there is such a thing as the readiness to suffer, to take a risk. It forgot that there is a point of view from which high failure o'ertops low success; and that to give oneself in a desperate cause, with but one chance in a million that our intervening will be of service, has always been held to be of the very nature of goodness. The low argument forgot all these things and forgot this, that there is a region of behavior in which it will always be well that men should not *argue*, balancing reasons and likelihoods and anticipating rewards, a region in which it will be well for us and for the fairer prospect of the human race that men shall yield themselves heartily to the final human language—to pity, to friendliness, though that pity and friendliness overwhelm us in some temporary disaster. For what security for the race is there except that *that* shall always and in each age be deemed a hideous prosperity which can bear to look upon the sorrows of others and even their sins without uneasiness and compassion, and the obscure but haunting sense that all are to be blamed for the miseries of each?

## VII

Now there will always be need for those who have any responsibility for the drift and set of men's thoughts about life to speak with emphasis upon such a temptation as that. It is so much easier to convict ourselves and



to rebuke others for doing something than for failing to do something. It is so natural for us to take credit to ourselves for having fulfilled those requirements which keep us decent and respectable and legally just. It is not so easy for us to take blame for not having done certain other things. We may always say that we had our own concerns: or that we could not be sure that by intervening we might not do more harm than good. But we at least who are Christians must not close our hearts to certain finer voices, to certain more delicate and even complicated appeals, and to calls which are indeed beset with difficulties whether we refuse them or obey them. For, to say no more, our Lord has warned us that, in the end of the days when we stand before God to be judged, our condemnation is the more likely to befall us, not for what we have done, but for what we did not do; not for our failures as we tried to take a man's part in this world; not for the marks of wounds taken in the battle of life; but for the ease which we defended; for the mean securities which we treasured; for the smooth unwrinkled brow which ought to have been furrowed with cares; and for the white hands which ought to have been scarred with labor, or bent with the long wielding of a faithful sword.

## COLOPHON

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